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LORD MILNER AND SOUTH AFRICA

BY

E. B. IWAN-MÜLLER

With two Portraits

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1902

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TO

SIR EDWARD LAWSON, BART.,

IN INADEQUATE RECOGNITION OF AN

UNBROKEN SERIES OF ACTS OF KINDNESS AND OF THOUGHTFUL

CONSIDERATION AND IN MEMORY OF A

MOST AGREEABLE ASSOCIATION IN JOURNALISM,

THIS BOOK, WITH GRATEFUL AFFECTION

IS DEDICATED BY THE

AUTHOR.

April, 1902.

'When, at the cost of much blood and money, we have been subdued, the fire will then only be damped and pent up, to break out into all the greater fury in the day of vengeance.'—*Despatch of President of Republic of Natal to Sir George Napier, Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, February* 21, 1842.

'As late as November, 1874, the year before Mr. Froude paid his first visit to the Cape, President Burgers had made a strong appeal before the Volksraad to the sentiment of unity amongst all Afrikanders from Table Mountain to Magaliesberg. . . . He assured the Raad that at the foot of Table Mountain hearts were throbbing more warmly for the Republic than perhaps even in the Free State itself.'—*Gresswell*, '*Our South African Empire*,' vol. i., p. 235.

'I hope that the course of events will enable Her Majesty's Government to take such steps as will terminate this wanton and useless bloodshed, and prevent the recurrence of the scenes of injustice, cruelty, and rapine which abundant evidence is every day forthcoming to prove have rarely ceased to disgrace the Republics beyond the Vaal ever since they first sprang into existence.'—*Sir Henry Barkly to Lord Carnarvon, December* 18, 1876.

'With confidence we lay our case before the whole world, be it that we conquer or that we die; liberty shall rise in South Africa like the sun from the morning clouds, like liberty rose in the United States of North America. Then it will be, from the Zambesi to Simons Bay, Africa for the Afrikanders!'—*Boer Petition of Rights, signed* '*S. P. J. Kruger, W. E. Bok, C. N. Hoolboom*,' *Heidelberg, February* 7, 1881.

'As in 1880, we now submit our cause with perfect confidence to the whole world. Whether the result be victory or death, liberty will assuredly rise in South Africa, like the sun from out the mists of the morning, just as freedom dawned over the United States of America a little more than a century ago. Then from the Zambesi to Simons Bay it will be,

AFRICA FOR THE AFRIKANDERS!'

—*Ex-State-Secretary Reitz*, '*A Century of Wrong*,' *circa October* 1, 1899.

'Vehementer a te, Brute, dissentio nec clementiæ tuæ concedo; sed salutaris severitas vincit inanem speciem clementiæ. Quod si clementes esse volumus, numquam deerunt bella civilia.'—*Cicero to Brutus*, B.C. 43.

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INTRODUCTION

A WORD of introduction is due from me with regard to the scope of this work and its relation to the title it bears. When this volume was first announced to the public the provisional title I adopted was 'Lord Milner and His Work.' Though there has been no departure from the original plan which I designed, it has seemed better for several reasons to modify the description. In the first place, I found that there was a widespread expectation amongst Lord Milner's friends and my own that I proposed to write a biography of the High Commissioner. A remonstrance soon reached me from a very distinguished friend of Lord Milner's with whom I have the honour of some slight acquaintance, in which the writer expressed his astonishment that I, 'with my old-fashioned Tory principles,' should contemplate such a latter-day vulgarity as that of writing the biography of a man still living whose work was still unaccomplished, or, even worse, that I should meditate the grosser offence of pen-and-inking a laboured appreciation or character-sketch of a friend. I was able to reassure my correspondent by the sincere avowal that he could not detest more than myself the new-fangled fashion of contemporary eulogy or censure. In this connection I may be allowed to say that there will be found in these pages no panegyric of my own which exceeds the limits of approbation one man may express to another in his presence without shuddering himself or causing his unhappy victim to shudder; nor has the object of my labours been

to vindicate Lord Milner against the many truculent and, in most cases, unwarrantable attacks to which the rancour of partisanship has exposed him. In a sense, of course, any record of the prosecution of a policy with which the writer thoroughly agrees is a vindication of that policy, but in no other sense have I sought to frame an apology for Lord Milner. The second consideration which caused me to abandon the original title was the unexpected prolongation of the war in South Africa. I must honestly confess that, though I was never amongst the optimists—a class from which Lord Milner himself must be excluded—I did anticipate at the beginning of 1901, when I took this work in hand, that the storm which has desolated South Africa would have passed away before the close of the year. It had been my intention to devote the latter part of my book to an exposition of the schemes of reconstruction which Lord Milner would have to undertake as soon as the sword was exchanged for the sceptre. To the gods, however, it has seemed otherwise. The storm, as Lord Milner recently said, is behind us, and not in front of us, but the ground is not yet in a condition even for the function of laying the foundation stone of the new fabric which is to be raised on the ruins of the old. It would, therefore, have been worse than idle for me to attempt to sketch even in rude outline the plan of the new building as I believed it to be conceived in Lord Milner's mind. Such being the case, I have closed this volume with a record of events up to the despatch of the ultimatum by Messrs. Kruger and Steyn. The original title would therefore have been misleading, since it would have covered only a half-told story. Except upon grounds of patriotism and humanity, I cannot regret that circumstances have imposed limitations upon my original scheme. They have enabled me to expand more fully than otherwise would have been possible that part of my work which from the outset I have regarded as the more essential.

The idea of writing the book occurred to me during a six months' sojourn in South Africa as special commissioner for the *Daily Telegraph*. My commission was a purely political one, and in the course of the letters which I addressed to the *Daily Telegraph* the war itself was only incidentally mentioned. I allude to this fact principally to show that my whole attention was devoted to the political situation, influenced as it was, of course, by the existence of hostilities, but not to the course of the military campaign. I found, not altogether to my astonishment, that the British public was woefully ignorant of the history of our relations with South Africa. It swam, so to speak, into their sphere of vision with the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 and with the subsequent revolt, appeased rather than concluded, by the 'Peace of Majuba.' South Africa has hitherto been to the inhabitants of this island somewhat of the nature of a variable star. After its acquisition, it appeared for the best part of a century as a 'faint telescopic object,' studied mainly through the glasses of the missionary and the philanthropist. Between 1877 and 1881 it blazed forth as a star of the second or third magnitude, only to sink again into comparative invisibility, till the discovery of the gold mines of the Witwatersrand and the consequences attendant thereon raised it gradually in the scale, until in 1899 it figured in the political heavens as conspicuous and as ruddy as the planet Mars. Yet there had been nothing very abnormal in the development of events which culminated in the struggle for supremacy in South Africa between the Dutch and the British. The intermittent displays of exceptional brilliancy were but the temporary manifestations of a process which was really continuous. Ignorance of this indisputable fact has been the cause of all the misapprehensions, not perversely voluntary, which found expression in Great Britain. Lord Milner's work in South Africa could not be understood by those who had not probed a little below the surface. I found even amongst persons

qualified to style themselves well informed a prevailing belief that the South African difficulty began with the Jameson Raid or with the Majuba policy of Mr. Gladstone, or most remotely at the date of the annexation of the Transvaal by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. One might as well attempt to understand the history of Europe on the assumption that the existing relations of the Powers cannot be traced further back than, say, the outbreak of the French Revolution. A situation such as that which Lord Milner was called upon to face was not like an ordinary chess problem. The position of the pieces on the board in one of those interesting puzzles which the chess player sets himself to solve constitutes the only factor which he has to take into account. The distribution of the pieces may indeed represent the situation of a game which had been actually played up to the point at which the problem is set, or the pieces may be arbitrarily placed without reference to earlier stages of a game. All that the student has to take into consideration is how, with the pieces being what they are and where they are, he can win the game. It is not so in any political problem, least of all in the final stages of the great contest that was to be played to a finish in South Africa. It was not enough just to realize the exact position and relative strength of the pieces remaining upon the board. It was essential to know how they came to be where they were and to understand the circumstances which had determined all the previous moves made by both sides in the prolonged combat. If the original annexation of the Transvaal, the revolt and subsequent restoration of independence, and the Jameson Raid, had been mere accidents of South African history, they might have been dismissed from consideration when they had been dealt with on their own merits. They were, however, but links in a very long chain. It was because the connection of these links with one another was either forgotten or had never been understood by the people of Great Britain, and because a proper under-

standing of it was essential to the formation of an independent judgment upon Lord Milner's policy, that I undertook this task. Perhaps this will be the most convenient place to state that, though the idea of the book received the sanction and warm approval of Lord Milner, without which I should never have attempted it, he has never seen a line or a word of its contents, and the views expressed in it are absolutely my own and not his. In point of fact, I have little doubt that with some of the judgments I have formed and expressed he will not, if he reads them, concur. There were many subjects upon which I would gladly have had his opinion and advice, but I felt that any trace of collaboration or even acquaintance on his part with the drift of my opinions would lead to misconstruction, innocent or malignant, alike by his friends and by his critics. As a matter of personal judgment, I do not think that my estimate of the situation as it presented itself to Lord Milner would differ materially from his own, otherwise this book would never have been written. I must, however, reiterate without a shadow of mental reservation that I and no other am solely responsible for all the opinions expressed in the following pages.

Of Lord Milner himself I shall say very little. I have known him and been honoured by his friendship for a period twice as long as that which Tacitus described as no mean cantle out of a man's life, and my mature judgment of his moral and intellectual character I have never disguised from his friends or mine. There let it rest. When I first met him he was a young student at King's College and I was a senior boy at King's College School. When I last set eyes upon him he was His Majesty's High Commissioner of South Africa, and, by favour of the King, a peer of the realm and a Grand Commander of the Bath. Between these two dates a great deal of water has flowed under the bridges, but for my own part I have never observed any change save such as the all-absorbing years and varied experience have effected

between the Alfred Milner of King's College and of Balliol and the Alfred Milner who is now the civil Governor of our possessions in South Africa with all their infinite potentialities.

It was an amusing discovery for one who had known Lord Milner for upwards of thirty years to learn for the first time in the columns of a pro-Boer organ that he had German blood in his veins. Indeed, I was gravely assured by a lady suffering from what has come to be known as Boeritis that at the age at which I first knew Lord Milner he was unable to speak English. Fortunately it is not the habit of public schoolboys or men at the Universities to probe very deeply the pedigrees of their contemporaries, and so perhaps it was astonishing that the twentieth century had dawned before I discovered that a strain of foreign blood ran through the veins of my friend.[1]

As I have already premised, I have no intention of dwelling upon the personal side of Lord Milner's career. It is too well known to repeat the story of how he swept the board of all the great University prizes at Oxford, and if I were ever so rash or so vain as to lay claim to distinction it would be based upon the fact that Lord Milner's name and my own stood side by side (in alphabetical order, of course) in the class list of December, 1876. He was not a frequent speaker at the Union Debating Society, of which he was subsequently

[1] In the modest seclusion of a footnote I may perhaps be allowed to indulge in a personal reference, with the sole object of protecting my future critics from a pitfall into which some of their predecessors have fallen. These exclusive Britons who rejoice in the substantial patronage of Mundellas, Brunners, Schwanns and Lehmanns, have arrived at the conclusion that as I bear a hybrid foreign name, I must necessarily be an 'undesirable alien.' I will therefore present them with so much of my pedigree as concerns them. My paternal grandfather expatriated himself from Russia, for reasons which seemed adequate to himself and his family alike before the nineteenth century was in its teens. With much good sense he naturalized himself an Englishman, and with still better sense married an English woman. My father, born an English subject, followed my grandfather's example and took to wife an Englishwoman of the sturdiest Anglo-Saxon stock. One would have thought that my pedigree mattered to no one but myself. To the Anglo-Boers it seemed otherwise. This is my answer to them.

President. In these boyish parliaments eloquence carries even more weight than it does in the assembly of which it is the microcosm. Lord Milner was not, or, at least, never struck me as being, gifted with eloquence, yet, though, as I have said, his interventions in debate were rare, his speeches carried more weight than those of any other man of his time. I can say this with the greater impartiality because he and I were on opposite sides in politics, and I even had the temerity to oppose him as candidate for office at the Union, an heroic effort on my part which resulted in deserved discomfiture. Yet it is still a pleasure to me to reflect, as I turn over the records of the Oxford Union Society, that we voted more frequently together than in opposite lobbies, and on all questions of what is now called Imperialism, more popular to-day than it was in the seventies, we were always found on the same side. The one debate which invoked all our youthful enthusiasm was the one to which Lord Milner referred in the memorable farewell dinner given to him on the eve of his departure for South Africa. Over that banquet, by a curious coincidence, Mr. Asquith presided as he presided over the debate at the Union on the occasion to which I refer.

'On that occasion' (said Lord Milner), 'you, Mr. Asquith, as now, were in the chair, and the subject of debate was the possibility of strengthening the ties which unite to this great country our great colonies and the great colonies with one another. The subject excited less interest than most which we debated in those days—less, I am glad to think, than it would excite at the present moment. But there were some half-dozen of us who hammered away—I dare say we bored our audience—on these ideas: That the growth of the colonies into self-governing communities was no reason why they should drop away from the mother-country or from one another; that the complete political separation of the two greatest sections of the English-speaking race was a dire disaster, not only in the manner in which it had come about, but for coming about at all; that there was no political object comparable with that of preventing a repetition of such a disaster, the severance of another link in the great Imperial chain.'

Again I rejoice to remember that I too was an humble member of the half dozen who used to hammer away on this

important subject at the expense, as Lord Milner says, of boring our audience. This may seem trivial and unimportant enough to-day, but it must be remembered that the ideas of these young Imperialists were expressed within a dozen years of the date when Sir F. Rogers (afterwards Lord Blachford), the Permanent Secretary of the Colonial Office, wrote to Sir Henry Taylor, one of the most prominent officials of the same office: 'I go very far with you in the desire to shake off all responsibly governed colonies; and as to North America, I think if we abandon one we had better abandon all.' And Sir Henry at the same period confided to the Duke of Newcastle, then Colonial Secretary: 'As to our American possessions, I have long held and found expressed the opinion that they are a sort of *damnosa hæreditas*.'

Of Lord Milner's career after leaving Oxford it is not my present purpose to speak. He made, as is well known, a slight incursion into journalism, and occupied for a time the Chair of Assistant-Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which years later I too for an almost equally brief period was destined to fill; but of journalism he has more than once said that it neither suited him nor he it. It was Lord Goschen who gave him his first opening in political life, and it was while he was Lord Goschen's private secretary that he made his single effort to enter the House of Commons for the Harrow division of Middlesex. Fortunately for his country and himself the electors of Harrow rejected his overtures; for it may be said, so far as Lord Milner is concerned, of a career in the House of Commons, as he had said of journalism, that it would neither have suited him nor he it. I remember very well meeting Lord Goschen soon after Lord Milner, at his instance, had been transferred to the financial post in Egypt, in which he was destined to earn his first non-academic laurels. Lord Goschen, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, observed that 'in parting with

Alfred Milner I felt as if I had lost my right hand.' There could be no higher praise from a distinguished public man, who would not deny that he was an exacting chief. The rest of his career before he assumed the great task of his life was tersely condensed into a few lines in Mr. Asquith's speech, which I give more fully elsewhere.

'The rest' (he said) 'of Sir Alfred Milner's career has become a matter of history. His financial and administrative genius has found itself equally at home in wrestling with the inextricable complexities of an Indian Budget, and in exploring new sources of revenue for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is a remarkable retrospect for a man who can hardly yet claim to enjoy the somewhat qualified privileges of middle age to have studied scholarship and metaphysics under Jowett and Green, and writing under Mr. John Morley; to have been introduced to official life by Mr. Goschen; to have learned the practice of administration under Lord Cromer, and the discharge of the delicate and responsible duties which fall to the permanent head of a great department of a State under Mr. Balfour and Sir William Harcourt is as unique, as it is a fortunate experience. It is indeed an experience eminently qualified to equip a man for the discharge of the most arduous task which the State can call upon any of its citizens to perform. To such a task he has been summoned by what I will venture to describe as the wise and happy discrimination of Mr. Chamberlain.'

With this tribute from an old and tried friend, to whom Lord Milner's political opinions do not entirely commend themselves, I leave the personal side of this introduction.

I must now say a word or two as to the plan and execution of this volume. I can sincerely affirm that I did not undertake the task with a light heart, nor was my sense of its magnitude and gravity diminished by the formidable mass of chaotic and disconnected materials with which I had to deal. To have attempted a continuous narrative of the conflict between the two systems which have struggled for ascendancy through just a century would have been tantamount to an endeavour to write a history of British South Africa. Such a labour was beyond my strength, and would have been impossible within the limits of the time which circumstances and the object of this book imposed upon me.

That history has yet to be written, and it must be written. The historian who undertakes it will not find his chief difficulty in the lack of material. I, who have only been able to sample, as it were, the vast accumulation of information which will be at the historian's disposal, can bear testimony to the industry and discrimination which such a labour will necessarily involve. I therefore have been compelled to content myself with a series of sketches illustrating the different phases of a story which through ever-changing incidents maintains its continuity by the one thread running through it from the beginning to the end. That thread is, as I have already pointed out, the prolonged struggle for ascendancy in South Africa between the sixteenth century and nineteenth century ideas of government. I am quite conscious that there are gaps and omissions which might well be filled up, but where such a hiatus is to be found it is due not to any 'fault,' as the geologists would say, but to the fact that less inportant incidents have had to make way for the more important. I am aware that this volume is more bulky than I originally intended it should be. It represents, however, only about two-thirds of what I had actually written. It has been condensed to bring it within a reasonable compass, but I do not think that in the excisions I have been compelled to make I have cut away anything absolutely essential to the proper understanding of the problem. Much that seemed to be of the greatest interest, and that ought to be known by those wishing to make a study of South Africa, has been left out, but enough, I hope, remains to demonstrate the accuracy of the judgment I here present. If I could compress the aim and object of these pages into a sentence, that sentence would be: 'This war is both just and necessary.' Necessary because it sprang from two antagonistic principles which have been at war ever since Great Britain made herself responsible for the administration of South Africa. These

principles had their roots deep in the history of the Middle Ages. Wherever they have been brought into contact they have invariably resulted in a life and death struggle. The nature of those principles I have set forth in many chapters of this book, but a necessary war is not always a just war, and I say that this war is just as well as necessary because of the very principles which are at issue and of the ideas which are in conflict. Those of the Anglo-Saxon system of government are in every respect infinitely superior to those which the Dutch in South Africa have upheld and defended with admirable tenacity since the date of their first occupation of the country. When De Tocqueville pointed out many years ago before the outbreak of civil war in America that such a conflict was inevitable unless one or two strongly-held principles were abandoned, his prophecy was received with incredulity. Sir Bartle Frere was not a philosopher or a historian, and yet in a few terse sentences in despatches he anticipated the struggle in South Africa as accurately as De Tocqueville had done in the case of the United States. The difference between the seer and the inductive philosopher is that while the former relies upon inspiration, or what he believes to be inspiration, the latter bases his anticipations upon a study of the phenomena at his disposal. As surely as the oak may be anticipated from the acorn, so certainly could this desolating war have been predicted from a close study of contemporary data at any time between the Great Trek and the ultimatum. The acorn, it is true, may never become an oak. It may be devoured by hogs or consumed in the fire, but if it is left to develop normally in a favourable soil it is bound in the course of time to become one of the kings of the forest. There have been periods in which the development of tendencies described by such men as Sir George Grey and Sir Bartle Frere might have been so treated as to have changed the course of South African history; but these tendencies unarrested, unchecked, and

uncontrolled, were as certain to culminate in a deadly struggle as the acorn in like circumstances is destined to become an oak. The time for adaptation and modification had long passed when Lord Milner was sent out to deal with the situation created by the mature development of these antagonistic systems. One or other had to be extirpated, for there was not room enough for both to continue growing side by side.

When I speak in this book of Lord Milner's work and Lord Milner's policy I am using the words in the same sense in which one speaks of Lord Wellesley's policy or Lord Canning's or Lord Mayo's in connection with India. Such phrases are never intended by those using them to ignore or belittle the influence and authority of the Minister or Ministers who conduct that policy from Downing Street. Such misapplication of a convenient phrase would be monstrously unjust in connection with the policy pursued by the Imperial Government in South Africa. It is no exaggeration to say that Mr. Chamberlain is not only the greatest and most capable statesman who has ever presided over the Colonial Office, but to all intents and purposes the only Colonial Minister in the true sense of the word that England has ever known. To him and to him almost alone belongs the credit of having materialized, as it were, the vague aspirations for Imperial unity which had long been vaguely entertained by patriots in every part of the Empire. It is well known that on the formation of Lord Salisbury's third administration almost any office in the Government was at Mr. Chamberlain's disposal. The fact that Mr. Chamberlain, to the surprise, it may be said, of his friends, deliberately chose the Colonial Office, was a guarantee that the instinctive desire for greater corporate unity between the members of the Empire would be brought within the sphere of practical politics. Hitherto the Colonial Office had been the round hole in which square pegs found a temporary resting-place

until a more appropriate function had been discovered for them. Mr. Chamberlain was one of the Trinity which controlled the fortunes and the policy of the Unionist party. That party had been called into existence by the attempt made to disintegrate the Empire, and with Mr. Chamberlain's familiar tactics of carrying the war into the enemy's camp, it was not extraordinary that he should have pushed to the front the alternative policy of consolidating the Empire. He had not been in office many months—certainly not long enough to acquaint himself with the details of its multifarious duties—before he learned that the South African branch of the firm of John Bull and Company was on the very verge of bankruptcy. There were only two courses to be pursued—either to dissolve the partnership with South Africa, or to put its affairs upon a solvent and permanent footing. The time for decision was short, and Mr. Chamberlain, without hesitation or delay, adopted the braver and the wiser course. To Mr. Chamberlain must be paid the lasting tribute of recognising for the first time in a practical form the necessity of welding together our colonies and dependencies into an integral part of the British Empire. To him, too, is due the credit of recognising that the ideal he had in view was incapable of realization so long as a great and important province of the Empire was allowed, as South Africa had been allowed, to drift into a state of disorganization and anarchy. To him this tribute above all others must be paid: that, having chosen the right man to accomplish the task of placing the Imperial supremacy in South Africa on a firm footing, he gave his subordinate a free hand, and backed him sometimes in unpromising situations with all the influence he deservedly commanded in the Imperial Government. But just as Lord Milner would be the first to admit that his labours would have been fruitless had he found his hands tied and bound as were those of his predecessors by former Colonial Secretaries, so

Mr. Chamberlain would acknowledge, as indeed he has acknowledged, that without Lord Milner's untiring and even passionate devotion to his duty the great work which Mr. Chamberlain contemplated would have been left unaccomplished. South Africa is indeed a nettle which must be gripped firmly and fearlessly or be let alone altogether. Even the opponents of the present South African policy of the Ministry will not assert that if a policy of 'thorough' were to be carried out it could have been entrusted to more capable hands than those of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner.

One observation I have yet to make before closing this introduction. When the idea of this work originated in my mind I entertained the hope, long deferred, that it would have given me the opportunity of laying before the public a complete vindication of the conduct and policy of Lord Milner's greatest predecessor, the late Sir Bartle Frere. It is not altogether without a feeling of disappointment that I have renounced this part of my scheme. The family of the late Sir Bartle Frere most kindly gave me access to the private papers of that distinguished and shamefully-treated statesman. A very cursory study of the ample material contained in these records convinced me that it was impossible, in a work primarily devoted to another purpose, to do justice to Sir Bartle Frere's extraordinary insight into and understanding of the South African Problem long before it had revealed itself to other eyes. I hope, therefore, with an extension of the facilities so generously given me by Sir Bartle Frere's family to set forth in greater detail than was possible for his most able biographer, Mr. Martineau, the details of the Imperial policy which Sir Bartle Frere sought in vain to commend to his official chiefs. It is more than twenty years since Sir Bartle Frere was practically dismissed from his governorship for refusing to cry peace, peace when there was no peace, and to prophesy smooth

things when the rugged road of a true Imperial policy was bruising his feet. In truth, he requires no laboured vindication to-day. The wreck and desolation of South Africa, which, though transient, are complete, constitute at once a warning against neglecting the advice of the man on the spot and an enduring monument to the rare political foresight and sagacity of Sir Bartle Frere. All that he saw must happen has happened. Every peril and sacrifice of which he forewarned his chiefs, could have been avoided, as we see to-day, had attention been paid to his counsels. The remedy which he advocated twenty years ago and which was despised by all, is the panacea to-day even of the man in the street. When he anticipated the disastrous culmination of the policy of drift, and when he predicted to within a year the date at which the harvest of our folly would be reaped, he knew that he would not be alive to deplore the fulfilment of his prophecy. The history of British South Africa has been a faithful realization of the fable of the Sibylline books. We were offered by Sir George Grey a federated South Africa without money and without cost. We refused the gift; destiny a second time, through the medium of Sir Bartle Frere, proffered to us again a united British South Africa, but not without payment and sacrifice. We rejected the second offer as contemptuously as we had thrown aside the first, and when the third and last volume was forced, as it were, upon us as an alternative to the complete loss of South Africa, we have had to purchase it not only with money but with blood and with tears.

It fell to Lord Milner's lot to demonstrate to the people of Great Britain that if this final offer were rejected we should be bereft of South Africa. It was not, however, South Africa alone, with all its infinite possibilities and prospects for our children, that we should have thrown away: the loss of South Africa would have been the beginning of the end of the British Empire. The young and vigorous

detect more quickly than the sufferer the palsied hand and uncertain will which betokens the approach of senility. Had we allowed South Africa to be wrested from our nerveless hands the great self-governing colonies would have lost but little time in severing from a sense of sheer self-protection the link that bound them to a moribund Empire.

Three names will ever stand out conspicuously in South African history—the names of Sir George Grey, Sir Bartle Frere, and Lord Milner of Cape Town. The two former failed to render the immense services they felt it in their power to offer to the Empire, not through any faults or weakness of their own, but because the inert and torpid brain of Downing Street paralyzed the vigorous hands which were at the disposal of the Empire. Lord Milner was a prophet as they had been prophets, but it was vouchsafed to him to address his warning and his encouragement to a generation which had slowly learned the lesson that the fortunes and existence of Great Britain were bound up in the stability of the Empire she had called into existence. Lord Milner, however, would be the first to admit that he climbed to the summit of the South African citadel upon what seemed to be mere heaps of débris from bygone days, though they were, in truth, the accumulated experiences and warnings of men who had sought to serve their country, and had sought, apparently, in vain.

It had been originally my intention to have said something by way of criticism on the books which have been published here and abroad on the Boer side. I have abandoned that intention, not because there was nothing to be said about them, but because there was a great deal too much. The Boers have not been very fortunate in the matter of their English champions. The first detailed English work on Anglo-Boer relations from a Boer point of view was written by Aylward, an ex-Fenian who was supposed to have taken part in the murder of Sergeant Brett at Manchester, and was

wanted for homicide in Kimberley; the second was by Mr. F. Reginald Statham, the author of many books and articles on South Africa. I am spared the painful necessity of explaining what manner of man Mr. F. Reginald Statham is, for in an attenuated form he has disclosed some of the episodes of his career in a little extenuating autobiography called 'My Life's Record,' in which he describes himself as 'poet, musician, novelist, journalist, essayist, etc.' It is sufficient to remark that the 'etc.' is comprehensive. There are, however, in my possession three letters of Mr. Statham's, one of which, wherein he incited Mr. President Kruger some years before the war to arm himself to the teeth, I have published in the *Daily Telegraph*. The two which I am about to reproduce are important only as illustrating the kind of political food on which the British public was fed for many years. Both of these letters were found at Bloemfontein amongst the possessions of the late President Steyn. The first bears date February 2, 1898, and was written on the strength of a report, which proved true, that Mr. Borckenhagen, of whom much will be said in the body of this book, was dying. It runs as follows:

(*Private and Confidential.*)

I see a telegram this morning to the effect that Mr. Borckenhagen has had an attack of paralysis of the brain, and is believed to be dying.

One may hope that the state of things is not so bad as this. But, supposing it to be so, and quite apart from the grief felt at the loss of a personal friend, it seems to me that, from a political point of view, this is terribly bad news for those who are interested in the cause of political progress and *independence*[1] in South Africa. With the exception of the *Volksstem*, which does not carry very much weight, the *Express* (Mr. Borckenhagen's paper) has of late been the only paper in South Africa that has been able to hold its own against the Rhodesian flood. This was owing to Mr. Borckenhagen's intelligence and independence, and if anything should happen to remove him from the sphere of his work, the loss would be almost irreparable.

It seems to me that, under such circumstances, the Volksraad might consider it was justified in taking some special steps to preserve the usefulness and independence of a paper that has done much valuable service.

[1] The italics are mine.

What I am afraid of is that the paper *of itself*[1] will not be able to afford the price of replacing Mr. Borckenhagen as Editor by anyone really competent to carry on his work. His estate, in the event of the worst being realized, would have to be administered for the benefit of his family. A great deal of the value of the estate, I imagine, depended on his own energetic supervision, especially where the *Express* was concerned, and the withdrawal of his supervision would mean a considerable reduction in the value of the estate.

Now, I believe that the only person possessed of knowledge and independence enough (not to speak of journalistic experience) to carry on Mr. Borckenhagen's work is myself, and I should be willing to undertake it if *your Volksraad, possibly in conjunction with the Transvaal Government*, thought the matter of sufficient public importance to give it a certain amount of financial support, which, if the Transvaal joined in, might perhaps amount to £500 a year. In such a case, I venture to think, the paper would maintain its political value—all these Rhodesian fellows are afraid of me—and while Mr. Borckenhagen's estate would be relieved, its value would at the same time be maintained. Of course the thing would have to be cautiously and judiciously done; it is not necessary to let all the world know the secrets of your housekeeping.

It is quite possible, of course, that the report as to Mr. Borckenhagen's health may be exaggerated. If so, the only thing will be to treat this as if it had not been written. But, if the case is as bad as seems to be reported, the sooner action is taken the better.

I have written confidentially to Dr. Leyds on the subject. There are, I think, reasons why he would be inclined seriously to consider the matter.[2]

I have in hand just now a biographical sketch of President Kruger which I expect will be published in about two months' time. It is rather hard to get information on some points, but I think I shall have made a pretty good job of it.

With kind regards,
Yours very sincerely,
F. R. STATHAM.

HIS HONOUR
STATE PRESIDENT STEYN,
BLOEMFONTEIN.

Unfortunately, Mr. Steyn does not seem to have kept copies of his own replies; but the tenor of his response to this inviting appeal can be gathered from another letter from Mr. Statham, bearing date March 31, 1898.

[1] These and subsequent italics are those of Mr. Statham.

[2] In the light of subsequent events it is highly probable that these 'reasons' were the desirability of having a Boer paper published in English from which Dr. Leyds could quote whatever seemed conducive to his purpose of making mischief between Great Britain and foreign Powers.

It, too, is headed 'Private and Confidential,' and runs as follows:

MY DEAR PRESIDENT,

Very many thanks for your kind letter of February 28.

As you suggest, I am quite aware of the difficulties that would be met with in the Volksraad, in connection with any such proposal as I indicated. I wrote, you see, under the very strong apprehension that the Rhodesian party, who are buying up all the newspapers they can lay their hands on, might try to muzzle the *Express* by making some very advantageous offer of purchase. In such a case as this, both your Government and that at Pretoria would be vitally interested in thwarting such a design, and would be justified in voting public money to that end. So far, however, there seems to be no break in the continuity of the *Express* policy.

Yes, indeed, Mr. Borckenhagen is a grievous loss in every way. But, do you know, I don't think he has, as a journalist, done more for South Africa than I have. Curiously enough, my connection with the *Natal Witness* began almost simultaneously with his taking over of the *Express*, and through the ten years that followed I fought the Afrikander Cause through the *Witness* in the midst of an unsympathetic atmosphere, and in the presence of constant threats of dismissal. *While in England, too, for just a year in* 1880 *and* 1881, *I did all the South Africa articles in the then two leading Liberal papers, the 'Daily News' and the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' besides magazine articles and my little book, 'Blacks, Boers, and British.' I have kept on the same fight in various places from* 1887 *till I last came to England in* 1895, *and since I have been here I have never for a moment relaxed my efforts to inform public opinion,*[1] *which is very unwilling to be informed. Perhaps, too, you don't know that in* 1893 *and* 1894, *as well as up till August,* 1895, *I wrote most of the principal leading articles in the 'Express.'*[2]

Excuse my raging thus. At times, I must confess, I feel just a little human vexation that work into which I have put my whole powers, and in the carrying on of which I have suffered no small losses, should seem to pass without recognition.

I expect my life of President Kruger—'Paul Kruger and his Times'—to be out shortly after Easter. I hope it will come under your notice.

With kind regards,

Yours very truly,

F. REGINALD STATHAM.

HIS HONOUR
STATE PRESIDENT G. T. STEYN,
BLOEMFONTEIN.

[1] From a correspondence which appeared in the Manchester papers some months ago, it would appear that the *Manchester Guardian*, the most bitter, and at the same time the most able, pro-Boer paper in England, was the channel through which Mr. Statham chiefly 'informed public opinion.'

[2] The italics are mine.

There is no particular reason for accepting Mr. Statham's bare assertion as evidence of a fact. It is, however, notorious that Mr. Statham did supply a vast amount of 'information' to the Radical press during the years he mentioned, and it would be interesting to learn from Mr. John Morley whether it is true that '*all the South African articles*' which appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* under his editorship were written, as Mr. Statham alleges, by the would-be successor of Carl Borckenhagen.

Had I attempted to examine and refute the innumerable inaccuracies contained in the works of other pro-Boer writers, I should have added very considerably to a volume which, as it is, is more than sufficiently bulky. I have therefore preferred to supply an antidote rather than to analyze the poison.

A book which, in the judgment of its author, requires an apology stands self-condemned. I have, then, no apology to offer for the following pages. Nevertheless, I feel myself bound to make certain admissions. I do not claim to have shown absolute impartiality in my judgments. On problems outside the sphere of abstract science I do not believe it is possible for anyone to be absolutely impartial. Historians who deal with contemporary events may be divided into three classes: (1) those who start with the assumption that their country is always in the right; (2) those who are predisposed to believe that their country is always in the wrong; and (3) those who, being conversant with the records of their own and of other countries, assume that their country in any given dispute is more likely to have been right than to have been wrong. I confess that I belong to the third category, and the researches which my task has involved have more than confirmed me in that agreeable conviction. One other admission I have to make. This book has been written, or, to be strictly accurate, has been dictated, in the fragments of meagre leisure snatched from the duties of an exacting

profession. I have therefore concerned myself with substance rather than with the form—*Davus sum, non Œdipus:* I am a builder, and not a house-decorator. My object has been to place at the disposal of the public a small cyclopædia of the certified facts of South African history. It will be found that here and there a reference has not been given to the authority quoted. The omissions, however, wherever they occur, have been due to accident, and not to intention. In a very small number of cases the transcript of the note did not bear the number of the page from which the extract was taken. It would have been easy to repair this defect, but it would have taken time, and as I have carefully verified more than ninety per cent. of the quotations with which this volume teems, and have found them all correctly transcribed, I have not thought fit to delay publication on account of this infinitesimal fraction. The same reason must be pleaded on behalf of certain disfigurements of these pages which are attributable to me, and not to the publisher. In revising the proofs, the fact escaped my eye that some few quotations were given in a different type from that used for other such extracts throughout the book. When my attention was drawn to this blemish, it was too late to remedy it without involving very considerable delay and not inconsiderable expense. It must therefore be understood that this apparent distinction has no significance.

It only remains for me now to record my gratitude to those who have helped me in my task. Let me say first that neither this nor any defence of British policy in South Africa could have been undertaken but for the existence of Mr. Martineau's invaluable 'Life of Sir Bartle Frere,' the republication of which in a popular form not only touched the consciences of the people, but opened their eyes to the perilous position of our supremacy in South Africa. The work thus admirably begun by Mr. Martineau was carried on with great energy and deserved

success by Mr. Basil Worsfold. There are other authors to whom I am indebted for information and enlightenment, and I have endeavoured to acknowledge their assistance in the text. My dear old friend Mr. Henley was good enough to lick into shape some of the chapters which follow. Ill-health on both sides interrupted this task of revision by the pen which, of all others now in active employment, is most capable of rendering such a service. To Mr. Charles Boyd, too, I am under great obligations for having, in the midst of other engrossing occupations, read the proofs as they were passing through the press. To my mother, whose nimble eyes—at seventy-seven keener than her son's—have been most helpful in the detection of errors, and to my sister, whose assistance has been invaluable, I need not tender my thanks.

E. B. IWAN-MÜLLER.

CHELSEA COURT,
April 25, 1902.

CHAPTER I

THE MATERIALS FOR HISTORY

It had been my original intention to preface this work with a succinct but continuous narrative of the political events which occurred in South Africa between the date of the British occupation and the year 1870, which marked a turning-point in our relations with those colonies. I have abandoned this design for reasons of which the unexpected length of other portions of this book is the least important. What has chiefly determined me in arriving at this decision is the extreme untrustworthiness, to use the least offensive term, of the hitherto accepted history of British South Africa. In common with all others interested in the subject, writers, politicians, and historians, I had regarded Dr. Theal's 'History of South Africa' as dependable, so far as facts and the more obvious inferences to be drawn from facts were concerned. Unfortunately, a careful study of his later volumes and a comparison of the views there expressed, with others which he had published elsewhere, led me to the conclusion that it was impossible to accept Dr. Theal as an authority without the most vigilant scrutiny, not only of his narrative itself, but of the official documents upon which it professed to be based. I had reluctantly formed this discomforting judgment before I had seen the article published in the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1900, and still longer before Mr. Cappon published his valuable book, 'Britain's Title in South Africa,' which, though in form a history of Cape Colony from 1795 to the Great Trek which took place in 1836, is in substance a closely-reasoned and effective criticism

of Dr. Theal as a historian. Mr. Cappon in his preface,[1] says:

Like many of my countrymen, I suppose, I had always been taught to believe, and, from what I had myself seen and examined, I was ready to believe, that British rule, while it had not, of course, been exempt from errors, had been in the main distinguished by its fairness and justice, and by liberal methods of administration meant to further the moral and economic development of the countries under that rule. The reader of Dr. Theal's works will hear little in support of such ideas. From his three histories I received only a painful impression of misrule and incapacity, and even of arrogance and tyranny, on the part of the British Government. It was nothing, apparently, but meddling and muddling, deliberate neglect of the feelings of the 'man on the spot' (who, of course, is always wise and right), and no single thread of moral wisdom or political forecast running through it all that the historian at least had any eyes for.

It happened, however, that Dr. Theal had been good enough to send to the library of the University on whose staff I have the honour to be[2] a set of the records of Cape Colony as far as they have yet been published, consisting of a mass of original documents, letters private and official, reports, investigations, census returns, and such-like, from which, with the help of other contemporary evidence such as may be had in the literature of that time, one may be able to form an independent judgment on the early period at least of British rule in South Africa. After a study of those materials, I am convinced that Dr. Theal is by no means the safest of guides in this part of the Empire's history; it even seems to me that he has laboured to darken the British side of it. He has passed lightly or in silence over the characteristic merits of British rule, especially when tried by the standards of the times of which he is speaking; he has misunderstood or misrepresented its highest traditions; he has unfairly emphasized its defects, and made as little as possible even of the economic and industrial advantages which it undoubtedly conferred on South Africa. And he has done this for the sake of setting the history of a special class of Boers in the best light, and of building up traditions of Boer history which are certainly at variance both with these records and a common-sense analysis of the facts. The problem of ruling and developing South Africa has had various phases, all of them difficult enough, but Dr. Theal has saved himself all trouble of seeking for the moral or economic principles involved in it by the easy application of one principle, namely, that the Briton was always in the wrong and the Boer always in the right. I have really been unable to discover any other organizing principle in his work.

And at the close of the book,[3] Mr. Cappon deals even more severely, but not less justly, with Dr. Theal's qualifications as an impartial historian:

It may be prejudice on my part, but it seems to me there is a kind of daring duplicity in Dr. Theal's way of stating things which reminds one strongly of the worst side of the Boer character. But, at any rate, a historian who is so obviously bent on stating one side only of the case should certainly withdraw at the first opportunity that solemn declaration

[1] 'Britain's Title in South Africa,' p. vi.
[2] Queen's University, Kingston, Canada.
[3] Appendix B, p. 339.

in his preface to the 'Story of the Nations' volume, that he was 'guided by the principle that truth should be told regardless of nationalities or parties,' and 'strove to the utmost to avoid *anything like* favour or prejudice.'

By a sort of poetic justice it has come to pass that both the assailant and the vindicator of British policy in South Africa should be members of a British colony, and that colony, not the one which is the subject of their labours, but the great Dominion of Canada. Dr. Theal is by origin a Nova Scotian, and Mr. Cappon is Professor of English in the Queen's University of Kingston, Canada. The Dr. George McCall Theal who, in 'South Africa,' in the 'Story of the Nations' series, dismisses Sir Bartle Frere with a couple of almost contemptuous references, is the same George McCall Theal who signed an address to that distinguished statesman assuring him that in Confederation lay the only prospects of happiness for South Africa, and condoling with him on the ungenerous opposition which had been offered to his work.

I will deal in some detail with one incident in the early history of British South Africa as illustrative of Dr. Theal's peculiar historical methods,[1] and of the pernicious consequence of their adoption by others.

The study of myths is the foundation of history. I am about to consider the growth of a myth which, in its mature stages, has bulked not inconsiderably in the tangled drama of South African politics. The incidents to which it owes its origin occurred in the year of Waterloo. The date is important because, although Great Britain had held the Cape since 1806, it was only in 1814 that, by purchase from the King of the Netherlands, the Crown became *de jure* the ruler of the Dutch South Africa. During the period of our military occupation, and for some six or seven years after the incorporation of the Cape within the British Empire, very little difference was made in the system of administration substituted by the short-lived Batavian Republic for that which had obtained under the autocratic rule of the Dutch East

[1] Compare also *Quarterly Review*, July, 1900, and *Macmillan's Magazine*, for September 1901. Also for the tone of Dr. Theal's treatment of the period of our first occupation of Cape Colony, compare the whole of 'South Africa a Century Ago,' by the Lady Anne Barnard.

India Company; and in 1815, when the affair of Slagter's Nek occurred, justice was administered locally by officials known as Landdrosts and Field-Cornets. As many of these as were willing to serve loyally under the new conditions were retained by the English Governor, and in 1815 the Landdrost of Graaff Reinet was Andries Stockenstrom the younger. His father, of the same name, a Swede by birth, had occupied various positions in the service of the Dutch East India Company, and had been appointed Landdrost of Graaff Reinet[1] during the governorship of General Janssens, Administrator for the Batavian Republic. He was murdered by natives in 1811; both he and his son enjoyed the rare distinction of winning the approbation alike of the Dutch colonists, the missionaries, the English settlers, and the Home Government.

The facts of Slagter's Nek were told within five years of their occurrence by Pringle the poet, the friend of Coleridge and Sir Walter. He was one of the settlers sent out by the British Government in 1819, and was allotted a farm on the Bavian's River (he changed the name to Glen-Lynden, which has clung to it ever since), previously occupied by one of the participators in the so-called 'insurrection.' Pringle was a man of much determination and of strong opinions; but his veracity has never been questioned. His prejudices, *tels quels*, were directed rather against Lord Charles Somerset the Governor, with whom he was brought into violent conflict, than with any other personage in Cape Colony. His narrative, therefore, can be implicitly trusted, and it is confirmed in all essential points by Mr. Henry Cloete,[2] a Dutchman with the natural predisposition in favour of his own race, who acted as Registrar to the Commission of Judges which tried the 'insurgents.'

At a place, since called Cameron's Cleugh, on Bavian's River, there lived a Dutch African colonist of the name of Frederik Bezuidenhout, who, according to Cloete, was a person of 'daring character' and of 'lawless habits,' and maintained a daily and unlawful intercourse with the Kaffirs. In his service was a Hottentot called Booy. When Booy's

[1] Indifferently spelt with two f's or one.
[2] The author of 'The Great Trek.'

contract had expired, Bezuidenhout 'peremptorily refused either to permit him to depart or to remove what little property he had on the place.' Stockenstrom, to whom Booy complained, instructed by letter one Oppermann, the Field-Cornet of Bavian's River, to investigate the case. Bezuidenhout at once admitted the facts; but instead of complying with Stockenstrom's order that Booy should be allowed to depart with his little orts, he told the Field-Cornet that he defied both himself and the magistrate who had sent him on what he called 'this officious errand'; also, Pringle says, 'to give further emphasis to his words, he fell violently upon poor Booy, gave him a severe beating, and then bade him go and tell the civil authorities that he would treat them in the same manner, if they should dare to come upon his grounds to claim the property of a Hottentot.'

On receiving the Field-Cornet's report, Stockenstrom instituted proceedings against Bezuidenhout before the local court. Bezuidenhout, however, treated the regular summons as he had treated the unofficial warning, and threatened the judicial messengers with personal violence. The case was then brought before the Judges of Circuit at Graaff Reinet. Bezuidenhout refused to put in an appearance, and was sentenced to imprisonment for contempt of court. The Under-Sheriff was therefore despatched by Stockenstrom to take him into custody, and acting, as Cloete, who was Registrar, tells us, 'under the order of the court,' was instructed 'to call in the aid of the nearest military force, if he thought it necessary or apprehended any danger.' The nearest military force was a detachment of the Cape Corps under the command of Lieutenant Rousseau, an Afrikander of Huguenot extraction, stationed at the Boschberg Post (now the village of Somerset). It was composed, this corps, of Hottentots, and it is a convenient afterthought of anti-English writers that the employment of native soldiers caused the so-called 'rebellion.' As matter of fact, though the Hottentot corps had been raised by the English during their temporary occupation of Cape Colony between 1795 and the Peace of Amiens (1802), it had been reorganized and increased by Governor Janssens till, as Theal tells us, it 'was brought to such an efficient state that it was regarded as a really

serviceable corps'; and, says Theal, 'its officers were colonists who understood the character of the men and how to manage them.' In any event, whether their colour was black or white, or their character good or bad, these Hottentots had been thought fit soldiers to fight against the British, and, assisted by Malays, had given a good account of themselves against General Baird. As many of the rank and file, and as many of the officers, as chose to take service under the King were retained after the British occupation. It was, then, with twenty men of this corps that the Afrikander Rousseau set forth to arrest Cape Dutchman Bezuidenhout.

That contumacious Boer had prepared for resistance. On the approach of Rousseau's party he betook himself to a cave in a huge rock overhanging the river, into which he had previously conveyed a large quantity of powder and ball, together with a supply of provisions to stand the siege; and, compelling two young men who lived with him to accompany him with their arms, he commenced a brisk fire upon the Under-Sheriff and the military force from his long-barrelled elephant gun (*Roer*). In his eagerness to get a good aim, he exposed himself, and was shot dead by one of the Hottentots. Before this, however, and subsequent to his opening fire on the troops, Rousseau, according to Cloete, 'crawled with difficulty to the top of the rocks,' and there, 'being stationed but a few feet above the aperture of this cavern,' had 'challenged Bezuidenhout to come out and surrender, acquainting him with the nature of his errand, and assuring him of personal safety upon his merely engaging to accompany the messenger of the court on the summons he was ordered to serve upon him; but the only answer he received was that he—Bezuidenhout—would never surrender but with his life.'

It will be seen that, so far, the most refined clemency could not have displayed a keener anxiety to execute with mildness the necessary process of civilized law than was shown in the case of Frederik Bezuidenhout. At his funeral, however, Pringle says, 'great excesses of inebriety took place, inflammatory speeches were delivered, and several of the most violent of these colonial "patriots," as they termed themselves, took a solemn oath over the corpse of Bezuidenhout to revenge his death.' They swore to hang Landdrost

Stockenstrom and the Field-Cornet Oppermann, whom he had first sent to interfere on behalf of the Hottentot Booy, and to drive the English troops and English laws over the Bruintjeshoogti. Philip sober confirmed the extravagances of Philip drunk; a meeting was held, at which Hendrik Prinsloo and Jan Bezuidenhout, brother of the deceased, spoke with bitterness and fire, and it was agreed that Gaika, the famous Kaffir, should be invited to assist in the task of driving the Hottentot regiment across the frontier. There is now, as always, no more heinous offence in the Afrikander's eye than the employment of black against white; and the overtures to Gaika (which were promptly rejected) are the most forcible comment upon the pretence that the employment of organized and disciplined Hottentot troops, under the command of a colonist, was the cause of the insurrection.

Amongst the rebels was one Stephanus Bothma, previously convicted of forgery. He drafted a circular letter, which was signed by Hendrik Prinsloo, to the neighbouring farmers, inviting them to take up arms. This letter was confided to two Afrikanders, Müller by name. They took it to Field-Cornet Van Wyk, who placed it in the hands of the Deputy Landdrost, Mr. Van der Graaff, who despatched an express to the nearest military officer, Captain Andrews, at Van Aard's Post on the Great Fish River, and he instantly sent a party of dragoons in search of Hendrik Prinsloo. (It is important to observe that Captain Andrews and his dragoons were the first and only Englishmen connected with the affair.) Prinsloo was arrested, whereupon Willem Krugel, a Dutchman, acting for Field-Cornet Oppermann, convened a meeting of farmers for the purpose of resisting a Kaffir invasion. According to Theal, 'When they assembled, to a man they declared themselves on the side of the Government. But on the following evening Theunis de Klerk, Jan Bezuidenhout,[1] and Nicolas Prinsloo, appeared among them, and persuaded them to assist in obtaining the release of Hendrik Prinsloo from the custody of Hottentot soldiers.' Landdrost Stockenstrom essayed to prevent an outbreak by persuasion and personal influence. 'On the first intelligence

[1] Pringle and others give his Christian name as 'Hans.'

of the intended revolt,' says Pringle, 'the Landdrost had posted to the disturbed district, appeared in the midst of them, and harangued them with so much effect on the madness as well as the criminality of those who were treasonably attempting to organize an armed resistance to the Government, that the evil-disposed were daunted and the wavering confirmed in their loyalty.' The more desperate, however, amounting to some sixty (Pringle), seized the pass which commanded the valley of the Great Fish River at the termination of the Boschberg Range; and here, says Pringle, 'they were met a few days afterwards by a detachment of British troops, hastily collected by Colonel Cuyler from the frontier garrison, accompanied by a body of their own countrymen—the burgher militia—under their local officers.' It was on the crest of a hill, then known as Slachter's Nek, a name which lent itself to transformation into Slagter's Nek, that the British and burgher forces came into contact with the insurgents. Even then an effort was made to avert bloodshed. Captain Fraser ordered his men to halt, and advanced alone to hold a parley. In Pringle's words, 'A gun was levelled, and a finger was on the trigger, to seal the fate of this brave and generous officer; but the weapon was struck up by Willem Prinsloo, who was afterwards released without other punishment than that of witnessing the execution of those who were hanged.'

I pause to note that the force acted under the authority of Colonel Cuyler, official prosecutor of the rebels, and after that in command at their execution. By the Dutch of a later day he is always referred to as 'the Englishman.' As matter of fact, he was an American colonist, and belonged to one of the oldest Dutch families of New York. In the War of Independence he had taken the King's side, and he had afterwards received a commission in the army. He was, in any case, a very capable and a much-respected man, who had been attacked by the missionaries for alleged excessive partiality to the Dutch colonists, and had insisted upon an investigation of the charges brought against him of unduly favouring the Dutch against the Hottentots.

With the exception of Jan Bezuidenhout, Cornelis Faber, his brother-in-law, who had been most active in endeavour-

ing to secure the assistance of Gaika, Theunis de Klerk, Stephanus Bothma the forger, and Abraham his brother, the rebels surrendered to Colonel Cuyler. Meanwhile, however, Bezuidenhout and Faber, with the two Bothmas,[1] says Pringle, had fled their squatting-place on the Bavian's River, where 'they lived in rude reed huts, and, excepting a small vineyard, planted by Bezuidenhout, had scarcely made any attempt to cultivate the soil.' A party of Hottentot dragoons, under Captain Fraser, was despatched to arrest them. Faber was wounded in the act of levelling his piece, and the two Bothmas surrendered without offering much resistance. Jan Bezuidenhout, 'though repeatedly and urgently invited to surrender, obstinately refused, and shot a soldier dead who approached him with a message. His wife loaded seven muskets as fast as her husband could fire, exclaiming: "Let us never be taken alive; let us die here together!"' It was not till Bezuidenhout had killed the soldier that a shot was fired by the arresting party. In the end Bezuidenhout was killed; his wife and their son, a lad of fourteen, who also was wounded, were taken prisoners. Ten guns and about forty pounds of powder were found in the waggon. Theal has this curious comment upon Bezuidenhout's armed resistance of the law: 'His code of honour was in some respects different from that of modern Englishmen, but it contained at least one principle common to the noblest minds in all sections of the race to which he belonged: to die rather than to do that which was degrading. And for him it would have been unutterably degrading to have surrendered to the pandours; instead of doing so he fired at them. His wife, Martha Faber, a true South African countrywoman, in this extremity showed that the Batavian blood had not degenerated by change of clime. She stepped to the side of her husband, saying, "Let us die together," and as he discharged one gun loaded another for his use. What more could even Kenau Hasselaer have done?' Seeing that these Hottentots were commanded by an English officer, had been employed to resist the occupation of Cape Colony by the English, and, moreover, were carrying out the orders of Dutch law under the direction of Dutch

[1] Cloete mentions a third Bothma, Cornelis, and spells the surname Botman.

Judges, it is hard to see what degradation a Dutchman could feel in surrendering to them. At any rate, Dr. Theal's palliation, if universally applied, would justify any criminal in shooting any force sent to arrest him with the composition of which he was displeased.

The rest of the prisoners, thirty-nine in number, were tried at Uitenhage before a Special Commission of the High Court of Justice, consisting of the Dutch Judges, W. Hiddingh—a relic of the Batavian Republic—and P. Diemel. Mr. Beelaerts van Blokland, who had been Attorney-General under the Dutch Government, was Secretary of the court, Mr. Henry Cloete was Registrar, and Landdrost Cuyler was Official Prosecutor. The prisoners admitted the facts as set forth above, and there was no dispute as to the evidence. The sentence passed upon the six ringleaders — Hendrik Prinsloo, Cornelis Faber, Stephanus Bothma,[1] Abraham Bothma, Theunis de Klerk, and Willem Krugel—was death by hanging. The remainder, thirty-two, after witnessing the execution, were subjected to penalties which ranged from banishment for life to imprisonment for one month or a fine of 50 rixdollars (£10). At the execution, which was presided over by Colonel Cuyler, the scaffold proved insufficient to bear the weight of five (Willem Krugel had been respited on the intercession of Colonel Cuyler), and the beam broke before the men were strangled. This naturally led to a piteous scene, as the execution was carried out in the presence of the felons' relatives. But, as Mr. Cloete says, 'the stern nature of his duty left the kind-hearted Colonel Cuyler no alternative but to see the execution carried out to the letter of the sentence.'

Dr. Theal's comment is again curious: 'The sentences were in accordance with the letter of the law; but it was generally supposed that the Governor would use his power of mitigation to prevent the penalty of death being inflicted, as no blood had been shed by any of the prisoners.' As matter of fact, one soldier had been killed, and Captain Fraser, being on an errand of mercy, owed his life to an accident. The sentence was passed in accordance with Dutch law, and it will be remembered that at this period

[1] The name is indifferently spelt, with or without the aspirate.

in Great Britain some 200 crimes, other than murder and including sheep-stealing, were punishable by death, and even after the accession of the Queen there were at least seven or eight offences still so penalized. Moreover, up to the first British occupation in 1795, the administration of Dutch law in the colony was so severe that the rack and torture were still used in order to extort confession, while breaking on the wheel was a common penalty; and on the proposed abolition of these barbarous methods, by command of King George, the Dutch Court of Justice at the Cape 'strenuously urged the necessity of their continuance as proper engines of terror for preventing the commission of capital crimes, which they thought simply strangling with a cord would be insufficient to effect.'[1] 'Under the idea of conveying terror into the minds of the multitude,' Barrow adds, 'the place of execution is erected close to the side of the great avenue leading into the town. The first object that presents itself to a stranger, after passing the castle, is a large gallows flanked by wheels and engines of death—objects not well adapted for impressing any very favourable opinion, either of the humanity of the people or the lenity of their laws.' This was written about 1802, and twenty years after Mr. George Thompson, whose attitude towards the Dutch was more friendly than Barrow's had been, writes thus of the Cape under Dutch rule: 'We might feel some surprise that from a country which laid the foundation of her own liberty at the expense of so much blood and treasure should have emanated a system of government so despotic as that of the Dutch colonies, where the gallows, the branding-iron, and the whipping-post appear to have been the common methods of enforcing subordination amongst the lower classes; while fines, imprisonment, and arbitrary banishment secured the authorities against any annoyance from the more elevated ranks.' It is obvious, therefore, that the hanging of men guilty of a crime still punishable by death in all civilized countries could have excited no surprise, and still less indignation, in a people thus draconically reared and ruled.

[1] Barrow, 'Travels in Africa,' ii. 138.

From the foregoing narrative,[1] compiled from the records supplied by Pringle and Cloete, who were virtually contemporary witnesses, it will be seen that the affair of Slagter's Nek had nothing to do with British government. Everybody connected with the affair, with the exception of the officers called in to assist the agents of the law, was of Dutch, Franco-Dutch, or Afrikander origin. The magistrates were Dutch, the Field-Cornets were Dutch, the informers were Dutch, the judges were Dutch, all the officials connected with the court were Dutch, Dutch the law which had been defied, Dutch the law which passed sentence, Dutch the language in which the proceedings of the court were conducted. The English Governor's sole contribution was the reprieve of one of the ringleaders on the recommendation of Colonel Cuyler, an English officer of Dutch origin. The responsibility of the British authorities was limited to the duty of seeing that the accused

[1] I have given the account of the incidents in Slagter's Nek as they were narrated by Pringle and Cloete instead of using the official narrative which is to be found in the Record Office. My reason is that, though Lord Charles Somerset's report tallies so far as it goes exactly with that given in the text, his account of the whole incident appears to be incomplete, and I think there must be a missing despatch, since I was unable to discover any account of the execution of the rebels or of the reasons which induced him to sanction more drastic measures than he originally contemplated. In Despatch No. 43, which is to be found in MS. at the Record Office, Lord Charles Somerset informed Lord Bathurst of the incidents narrated in the text, and adds: 'This affair which I have so minutely detailed would not have been calculated to cause much sensation had it not been for the serious revolts which took place in the same part of the country under the former Dutch and British administration. . . . The magistrates of both the interior districts (of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage) speak very favourably of the conduct and sentiments of the inhabitants of these districts generally, with the exception of those of the division of Tarka where this affair took place.' And a little later on Lord Charles uses significant words which Dr. Theal as significantly seems to have overlooked. 'My intention,' he says, 'is to make examples of the ringleaders here after legal conviction, and to remove to another part of the country such as have been most violent. . . . With respect to the others, I deem it wiser to consider them as ignorant and deluded men whom it is my wish to civilize rather than to punish with unrelenting severity.' It is this passage, coupled with the absence of any report upon the execution of the rebels, which constrains me to believe that a despatch has been lost in which Lord Charles completed his narrative, and explained why he had abandoned the more lenient view of the insurrection which in this despatch of December 11, 1815, he was disposed to take. This hypothesis is strengthened by the postscript to the despatch I have quoted, in which Lord Charles adds that 'Lieut.-Col. Cuyler states that he has not found it necessary to act upon the authority I gave him to proclaim (in the last extremity) martial law, but that the civil judicature is amply sufficient for the restoration of order.' Every member of the administrative civil service in the districts of Graaff Reinet and Craddock was an Afrikander, as may be gathered from Lord Charles Somerset's despatch of September 1, 1816.

had a fair trial and that the punishment meted out to them was not in excess of that allotted by the law or permitted by public opinion, and the case cannot be better summarized than it is by Cloete, who, for reasons to which I shall presently refer, was by no means averse from making capital against the British Government. 'Thus ended,' he says,[1] 'the Rebellion of 1815, the most insane attempt ever made by a set of men to wage war against their Sovereign, the result of which could not have been doubtful for a single moment. It originated entirely in the wild, unruly passions of a few clans of persons who could not suffer themselves to be brought under the authority of the law; the sentence passed upon them was no other than might have been expected in a case of overt rebellion thus committed. . . . The culprits or their friends could have no cause for just complaint when for crimes such as these the rigour of the law was enforced.'

According to Canon Knox-Little, there was a yet more dramatic sequel to the story, which is not recorded in any of the earlier narratives. In his 'Sketches in South Africa' (p. 125) he writes in this wise: 'When honestly and fully told the story redounds to the credit of the Cape Government. The convicted men did certainly deserve punishment in the interests of public order. But the Governor rightly deemed the execution of the extreme sentence unjustly harsh. He reprieved the criminals. The Field-Cornet on whom the duty of carrying out the execution devolved, for some reason of his own, played the part of a Martin Relph, not from exactly the same motive, but probably from some motive of private spite. He *had in his possession*[2] at the time of the execution the Governor's order for the pardon of the incriminated prisoners, and he suppressed it. But so sure was he that he himself would be punished for his iniquity that he committed suicide. Will it be believed that the latter part of the story has been often omitted for party purpose?'[3]

That, and a great deal more, can be believed when we

[1] Cloete, 'History of the Great Boer Trek,' p. 28.
[2] The italics are Canon Knox-Little's.
[3] I do not know Canon Knox-Little's authority for this sequel.

study the use which has been made of Slagter's Nek by prejudiced historians and their followers. In the accounts given by Cloete and Theal there is an undercurrent of resentment against the supposed harshness of the British Governor, which, we are told, made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the Dutch colonists. There is every reason, however, to believe that this supposed resentment was a pure afterthought—that it had no existence prior to the emancipation of the slaves which, with its attendant circumstances, alienated Dutch feeling nearly twenty years later. The evidence for this theory is both positive and negative. The positive evidence is supplied by Pringle, who, writing from the spot within a few years of the occurrence of the incident, distinctly states that 'the Dutch African inhabitants of the Tarka and of the lower part of Bavian's River, by whom our location was on three sides environed, consisted in a great measure of the persons who had been engaged in this wicked and foolish rebellion, or their family connections, of the names of Erasmus, Prinsloo, Vandernest, Bezuidenhout, Labuscagne, Ingelbrecht, Bothma, Klopper, Malan, De Klerk, Van Dyk, etc. They had, however, received a lesson not likely to be soon forgotten; and we found them very submissive subjects to the Government, and inoffensive, so far as we are concerned.' Pringle had certainly no reason to be partial to Lord Charles Somerset, with whom he was brought into such violent conflict that he ultimately left the country; indeed, he makes it a cause of complaint against the Governor that he treated those who had risen in rebellion with undue generosity. 'The real question at issue,' he says in his 'Narrative of a Residence in South Africa' (p. 102), 'is: What claim had these men as a body—not to a generous amnesty, not a just protection, but to *the peculiar favour*,[1] to the *lavish munificence*, of the British Government? What claim had they to rewards at the expense of the Kaffir people, on whom they and their families had inflicted so many grievous wrongs, and an indirect breach, moreover, of solemn stipulations agreed to with the Kaffir chiefs? Finally, what claims had the Bothmas, the Erasmuses, the Kloppers, the Vandernests, the Prinsloos, the De Klerks, the Bezuidenhouts, *et hoc genus*

[1] The italics are Pringle's.

omne, the ringleaders of the rebel peasantry in 1815, to enormous grants of land from the Government at the very moment when the Governor was refusing, and that with the most contumelious arrogance, sufficient land even for adequate subsistence to the heads of parties in Albany—to gentlemen of rank, education, and integrity, who had expended very considerable capital in establishing a British settlement under the especial patronage of the British Government, and several of whom, after spending the prime of their lives in the active service of their country, had sunk their whole substance in this enterprise?' In a footnote, too, he gives as an instance the case of Berand de Klerk, 'residing near Somerset, and then in possession of a tract of country extending by measurement to 21,374 acres, the greater part of which consisted of previous grants from the Government, to whom was promised four additional places in the ceded territory for himself and family, amounting to 10,000 or 12,000 acres more. His brother, the Heemraad De Klerk, already in possession of 6,000 acres, was promised about 12,000 acres of ceded territory.' And he further tells how Van Wyk, another Heemraad, a man of independent spirit, who, 'exclusive of his other merits, had, as a Field-Commandant of the Tarka, a principal hand in suppressing the rebellion of 1815,' was dismissed from office for not being sufficiently submissive to Lord Charles Somerset. This emphatic testimony is confirmed by the fact that reference to Slagter's Nek by other writers, his contemporaries—some of whom would have been glad enough of such a stone to throw at the Government if public resentment had been deep enough and widespread enough for them to have heard of it—make no sort of reference to the affair.[1]

In 1842, on February 21, a protest was signed by Joachim Prinsloo and the members of the Raad at Pietermaritzburg against the refusal of the British Government to recognise the Boer Republic established in Natal. It was the work of J. N. Boshoff, who was Landdrost of Pietermaritzburg. In the flamboyant language of Dr. Voigt[2]: 'He had to voice

[1] Compare Thompson, 'Travels in Southern Africa' (1821-29); the Rev. J. Campbell, 'Travels in South Africa'; Dr. Philip, and others.

[2] 'Fifty Years of the History of the Republic in South Africa, 1795-1845.'

the new nation's sense of wrong and injustice, to proclaim to the world the perishing Republic's accusation against England. His despatch was a masterpiece. It is a valuable historical document.' The indictment, which for ability and concentrated bitterness deserves this description, covers thirteen octavo pages in Voigt's volumes.[1] It recites every grievance, great or small, just or imaginary, under which the Dutch colonists had supposed themselves to labour since the cession of Cape Colony to the British Crown. And, so far from referring to the execution, though the first signatory, Joachim Prinsloo, had been an unwilling spectator thereof, 'Did we,' it asks, 'as the Canadians acted recently, take up arms, demanding that justice be done to us? No; we gave the coat also to him who had taken from us the cloak.' From which it seems fair to infer that Slagter's Nek was expressly excluded by the protestants from their purview.

Further evidence to prove that the myth of Slagter's Nek is due to an afterthought is needless. It seems to have appeared after the servile emancipation and the consequent alienation of the old Dutch colonists. Cloete, from whom Dr. Theal borrowed his impressions and also his language, was himself a sufferer by the emancipation, and indeed, as he tells us,[2] was joint spokesman of some three or four thousand others, who, in 1830, 'had the painful duty of solemnly assuring His Excellency (Sir Lowry Cole), in the name of the assembled throng and of all the slave-owners throughout the colony, that '*they could not and would not comply with this law*'[3]—the law in question being an Order in Council that every slave-owner should keep 'a punishment record-book' in which he 'was compelled to make himself, if he could write, or otherwise cause to be made, an entry of every punishment of whatever kind he may have inflicted upon every slave, detailing with the greatest minuteness every particular of the offence, of the punishment, of the witnesses to it, etc.' This predisposition of Cloete's must be remembered in reading his statement of the impression (gathered by him nearly forty years later)

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 189-202.
[2] 'The History of the Great Boer Trek,' p. 49.
[3] The italics are Cloete's.

made upon the mind of the Dutch colonists by the incident of Slagter's Nek. Here are his words[1] (the lecture was delivered in 1852): 'When here (Pietermaritzburg) as Her Majesty's Commissioner in 1843-1844, I endeavoured frequently in converse with many influential farmers to soothe down the feelings of hostility which they openly avowed against Her Majesty's Government; and when I had frequently (I hoped) succeeded in convincing them of the mistaken views which they had imbibed as to the principles and objects of the Government in public matters, and proved to them satisfactorily that (as regarded their future prospects) an entirely new system had been laid down, and was now carrying on, to give them the enjoyment of the utmost share of rational liberty in all their political institutions; when I had succeeded so far in convincing their minds, I have more than once felt a pang to hear the embodiment of their inmost feelings expressed in the words, "We can never forget Slachter's Nek."' In view of the silence of so many contemporary writers, it is impossible to believe that a feeling of vindictiveness and resentment against the British Government on the score of Slagter's Nek existed during the years between 1815 and 1833. But the myth, once started, has been kept going with immitigable industry. Dr. Theal is the worst offender. His 'History of South Africa,' a work of ability and research, is strongly and bitterly biassed against the English. But in this history, which is written rather for the student than for the general reader, he at least furnishes the antidote of ascertained facts to the poison of prejudice, in which his pen is steeped. In the volume which covers the period of 1795-1834, he has given the story of Bezuidenhout's insurrection with much detail and with general accuracy. But in the volume on South Africa which he contributed to the admirable 'Story of the Nations' series, published by Mr. Fisher Unwin, he explicitly misstates the matter thus:[2]

Lord Charles Somerset had been in the colony a little longer than a year, when an event took place which stirred the smouldering fire of disaffection to British rule. There was a farmer named Frederik Bezuidenhout living on the eastern frontier in a secluded dell in the valley now called Glen Lynden. This man was summoned to appear before a court

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 29.
[2] 'South Africa' (the 'Story of the Nations' series), p. 148.

of justice on a charge of ill-treatment of a servant, but did not attend, so a company of pandours was sent to arrest him. When they were seen approaching, he fired upon them, and then took shelter in a cavern close by, where, as he refused to surrender, he was shot dead. On the following day his relatives and friends assembled for the funeral, when one of his brothers declared that he would never rest until the Hottentot regiment was driven from the frontier. The others present expressed themselves of the same mind, and a plan of insurrection was made. An attempt to induce others to join them failed, however, and they were never able to muster more than fifty men. Within a very short time the Government became acquainted with what was taking place, and as a strong force of burghers who had no sympathy with lawlessness assisted the troops sent to restore order, the revolt was suppressed without difficulty. Most of those who had taken part in it surrendered, but a few tried to escape to Kaffirland. These were followed by a party of pandours, and all were captured except Jan Bezuidenhout, who would not surrender, and, with his wife and little son helping him, stood at bay till he was shot dead. The prisoners, thirty-nine in number, were tried by Special Commission of the High Court of Justice, and six were sentenced to death, the others to various kinds of punishment. Lord Charles Somerset would only mitigate one of the death sentences, and five of the insurgents were hanged in presence of their companions. The burghers who had assisted the Government were greatly shocked by this severe punishment, for they had not thought they were helping to bring their misguided countrymen to death. By them, as well as by the families of those who took part in the disturbance, the event was long remembered with very bitter feelings towards the British authorities.

Thus Dr. Theal; and now for the others. Mr. Froude refers to the incident in a passage remarkable alike for its brevity and for its inaccuracy. 'When it was known,' he says, 'that we (the British) were not going away, a few hot-spirited young colonists rebelled; they were soon crushed. We sympathize generally with insurgents in other countries. Insurrection against ourselves we treat as if it were something peculiarly wicked. The rebel leaders were hanged, and the martyrs of Slagter's Nek are remembered in Dutch households in South Africa much as your own Wallace is remembered here.'[1] Mr. Bryce, evidently copying Theal and Cloete, refers to it as follows: 'A deplorable incident which befell on the eastern border in 1815 did much to create bad blood. A slight rising due to the attempted arrest of a farmer on a charge of maltreating his native servant broke out there. It was soon suppressed, but of the prisoners taken six were condemned to death, and five were hanged. This harsh act, which was at the time justified as a piece of necessary firmness, produced widespread and bitter resent-

[1] 'Two Lectures on South Africa,' pp. 12, 13.

ment, and the mention of Slagter's Nek continued for many years to awaken an outburst of anti-British feeling among the Boers.'[1] Mr. C. P. Lucas, in what may be described as the semi-official history of South Africa, is equally misleading: 'Lord Charles Somerset's reign began with an uprising of border farmers in 1815, irritated by Government interference with their treatment of the blacks. At a place named Slagter's Nek most of them laid down their arms, and five were afterwards hung for high treason—a stern sentence, and one which alienated Dutch sympathies.'

Thus the historians, the sober-minded, the austere. It is not astonishing, therefore, to find the author of one of those gossiping accounts of South Africa beloved of trippers dealing with Slagter's Nek in this fashion: 'A number of Boers, becoming exasperated at the punishments which were inflicted upon them for ill-treating Hottentots in one way or the other, broke out into open rebellion, and the authorities singled out five ringleaders—members of the best Dutch houses—for prosecution, conviction and death, according them but a very imperfect and, I must add, unfair and one-sided trial. No wonder, then, that the hatred of the old settlers to the new régime reached fever-pitch; especially when we take the fact into consideration that the whole weight of the most influential families at the Cape, and, in short, of the entire Dutch community, was thrown into the scale to prevent the sentence of death being carried out.'[2] This, I say, is not astonishing; but Sir William Butler once had authority at the Cape, and should have known better than to write, as he does in his 'Life of Sir George Pomeroy-Colley': 'In 1815, during the government of Lord Charles Somerset, trouble arose between them (*i.e.*, English officials and the Dutch) in the extreme east of the colony, upon certain rights guaranteed to the Dutch settlers by the Convention of 1806. This first outbreak of discontent was easily suppressed, but not without tragic occurrences, which marked it as the source of a long series of political troubles.'[3] Does he mean that among 'the certain rights guaranteed to the

[1] 'Impressions of South Africa,' p. 137.
[2] 'South Africa: a Sketch Book,' by J. Stanley Little (1887), p. 4.
[3] 'Life of General Sir George Pomeroy-Colley,' p. 118.

Dutch settlers' was that of resistance to the law, and the shooting of the persons charged with its execution? His brief allusion contrasts rather grimly with an extract from a letter of General Colley a few pages later (122), which, as he tells us, 'gives by no means an unfavourable picture' of a colonial assembly. 'One of the most telling speakers,' writes Colley from Maritzburg, 'I have heard is an old Dutchman named Boshoff. He was for many years President of the Orange Free State, and is commonly known as Hangman Boshoff, because of an Englishman whom he had hanged on his own responsibility, after the jury had failed to agree at the trial. A very resolute-looking old gentleman, and a nervous (in the strong sense) and impressive speaker.' The fact that an Englishman had been hanged by a Dutchman 'on his own responsibility' is passed by as needing no comment; but the execution of five rebels after due trial by their own countrymen, under their own law, is described as 'a tragic occurrence, the source of a long series of political troubles.'

Perhaps, however, the very flower and crown—'the ultimate and consummate blossom'—of misrepresentation is found in the 'Fifty Years of the History of the Republic' (1899) of Dr. J. C. Voigt. The skeleton was obviously articulated by Dr. Theal, but the flesh and blood are Dr. Voigt's. The original offence committed by Bezuidenhout—refusing to allow a Hottentot, whose period of service had expired, to depart and to take his little property with him; defying the Dutch magistrate who intervened on the Hottentot's behalf; beating the Hottentot for venturing to appeal to the law, and threatening to treat the officers of the law in the same fashion—is thus airily misreported: 'Bezuidenhout was one of those most bitterly opposed to the British Government, whose jurisdiction he refused to acknowledge when summoned before the Landdrost of Graaff Reinet, for striking a Hottentot with whom he had had an altercation.' Thus airily the fact that the officer of the law was protected by a company of Hottentot soldiers, whom the British had taken over from the Dutch administration: 'Can it surprise us even at the present day, when Imperialism is fashionable, that the disaffected frontiersmen looked upon Bezuidenhout's offence

as trivial and paltry compared with that of the Government and its officials, who did not hesitate to take a step fraught with the greatest danger to the prestige and the ruling influence of the white colonists, and who by their conduct seemed to endanger the safety and the very existence of South Africa as a white man's colony?' (i. 128). The idea grows upon the learned author; for when Bezuidenhout, whom Cloete and Theal, as well as Pringle and Lord Charles Somerset, describe as a desperate ruffian, resolved to resist the officers of the law, you are told (p. 129) that, 'As he grasped his musket to do battle, alone and unaided, for what he regarded as the cause of his country, he must have realized the utter futility of his further resistance to Fate; but he scorned the idea of yielding. Perhaps as he took his station at the entrance to the cave he dreamed of the future, when, through his death, his people would be brought to rise in arms against those whom he regarded as tyrants and oppressors.'

Follows a rhapsody upon Brother Jan (p. 130): 'The shots had been heard on a neighbouring farm, and as night was falling Jan Bezuidenhout, elder brother to the deceased, made his way up the kloof. His mind was already filled with dark forebodings, which the deep stillness of the mountains and the desolate grandeur of the wild rocks round him only helped to intensify. When, at the entrance of the cave, the pale light of the stars showed him the cold and lifeless body of his brother, need we wonder that the strong man felt so overpowered by the tragic circumstance of the catastrophe that he cursed the British Crown and all its minions, and swore to avenge what to him appeared an outrage, or perish himself? It is the day after Frederik Bezuidenhout's death. The wind moans through the forest trees in the ravines of the Bavian's River mountains. . . . The small group of mourners by that open grave know well that resistance against the British Government by force of arms is a hopeless task. But they see before them the melancholy result of the work of England's Hottentot soldiers. From the wild mountain ravines, from the forests of their native land, voices call to them to rise against the oppressor. These voices are the echoes of the impassioned words spoken to

them by the brother of the dead man. For Jan Bezuidenhout, standing by that grave, has given expression to the anguish of his soul; he has called on those round him to drive the Hottentot troops out of the country.'

As we have seen, the authorities were informed of the rising by certain Dutch farmers, alarmed by the invitation to Gaika to join the dance. Voigt thus pleasantly alludes to their conduct: 'The halter having been thus placed round the necks of the Afrikander leaders by those of their own countrymen who elected to play the rôle of traitors in this drama, it remained for the British Government and its adherents to make preparations for erecting the scaffold' (i. 133). Of course he defends the overtures to Gaika: 'The leaders of the insurrection determined at once to secure, at least, the friendly neutrality of the powerful native chief' (i. 136). (As matter of fact, Gaika had been offered, and had refused, a share in the prospective loot.) 'To secure the friendship of Gaika was perhaps necessary and unavoidable under the circumstances. But when the fact became known that the leaders of the insurrection had sent a mission to the chief, large numbers of frontiersmen, who would otherwise have fought against the English and the Hottentots, refused to join in the attempt, while many burghers even ranged themselves on the side of the Government, prepared to go against their own countrymen, for whose conduct they could see no excuse' (i. 137).

From this time forth the Bezuidenhouts and Slagter's Nek ring through the pages of Voigt—as thus: 'British dominion and a Government of despotism had been imposed on all South Africa by force of arms. Once more the frontiersmen had risen in insurrection in 1815. Then had followed the terrible punishment of Slagter's Nek. In the land of his fathers the frontier pioneer had seen some of his leaders brought to the scaffold; others had been sent into banishment. Once again the borderland was in subjection to a foreign rule' (i. 225). Thus again: 'The Republic in South Africa is not built on sand; its foundations are on rocks. Mountain summits—Slagter's Nek, Chlooma Amaboota,[1] Amajuba—are the central supporting pillars of the

[1] The scene of Retief's murder by the Zulus.

enduring edifice' (ii. 47). Thus also: 'The cold, silent sentinels stood on the hill of Chlooma Amaboota, waiting, guarding the sacred document—beckoning; and on many a lonely farm near the hills round Slagter's Nek, the women, clasping their children to their breasts, took the old family Bibles, and the men, grasping their guns, looked for the last time at the mountains before leaving their homes for the unknown and terrible North' (ii. 70). Thus once more: 'Their hearts did not fail; they believed in the justice of their cause. They heeded neither the promises nor the threats of the British Government proclamations. . . . The way was far. Roads there were next to none in those days. But the voices from Slagter's Nek Mountain and from the Chlooma Amaboota in Zululand were loud; and onwards—nearer over the plains of the Orange River and through the passes of the Drakensbergen—came those who had heard the mandate and the call—the mandate of the martyred farmers, the call of the murdered sons' (ii. 77). And, for the last time,[1] thus: 'Hark! the bells are tolling their warning in the great echoing belfry of the Temple of History. Is it only a warning, or are they sounding the death-knell of an empire?'

In itself the myth of Slagter's Nek is relatively unimportant; but to take it by itself is impossible. Other travesties of South African history have not, perhaps, been daubed with quite such startling colours; but, unfortunately, for the most part the history of South Africa in the last century has been written by those whose object was to present the British Government in the most forbidding and repulsive light. Mistakes there have been, with vacillation, weakness, occasional panic, and persistent inconsistency, which have produced results lamented alike by Dutch and British; but there is not the slightest proof that those Englishmen who have administered South Africa have ever departed from the rules of justice and fair dealing which in all other parts of the world have won the Raj a tribute of admiration, often grudgingly given, from disinterested onlookers. If the story of South Africa seem an exception, the explanation must be sought, and will be found, in the perverted and distorted

[1] *Op. cit.*, Appendix, p. 307.

accounts of episodes in that story, of which the myth of Slagter's Nek, though the most effective, is not the most deliberate illustration.[1]

[1] By a curious coincidence it was the refusal by one Bezuidenhout, a descendant of the Bezuidenhouts of Slagter's Nek, to pay taxes to the British Government in 1881 that gave the signal for the first Boer War. And it is equally curious that the farm on which the standard of revolt was raised was situate on the Witwatersrand before the discovery of gold not far from the site of Johannesburg. In the *Outlook* of February 2, 1901, in an interesting article on the House of Bezuidenhout, there is the following passage: 'Not so many years ago, before Johannesburg had an existence or a name, Bezuidenhout lived, or rather struggled to live, in extreme poverty on his farm of immense acreage. An offer came in of £200, and he was hastening to foreclose, eager to rid himself, even for so modest a sum, of his unprofitable estate, when the rest of his family begged him, and at last persuaded him, to wait awhile before dispossessing them, and to hold on to the home and the land for just one more year. In that year his barren acres became gold-mines, and before long a valuable town property filled his empty coffers with undreamed-of wealth. There is a little tale told that pictures somewhat vividly the change of fortunes. One day it happened that a shilling got dropped into a bush. A shilling in that early time had its value and must be recovered. The bush was thoroughly investigated and explored, but the shilling remained hidden, and at last it was only on burning the bush to the ground that the lost shilling was found and made over to the family treasury.'

CHAPTER II

POINTS OF VIEW

Of all fallacies to which the historian is liable, that of judging the policy and conduct of the men of one generation by the recognised standards of another is the one against which we are most frequently warned. No caution, however, is at once so generally uttered and so universally disregarded. The policy of the statesmen of the old régime in France is criticised even by thinkers like Carlyle as though all the experience gained during the Revolution and since was at the disposal of Louis XVI. and his advisers. The commonest form which this fallacy takes is that of ignoring different points of view; the point of view of one generation is no more that of another than the point of view of childhood or youth is that of middle age or senility. We are apt to define points of view as right or wrong as they seem reasonable or unreasonable to ourselves. People who ridicule one set of alleged miracles accept without hesitation or question another set not more clearly vouched for, or more in accordance with the ascertained laws of Nature. The simple faith of one race is the grovelling superstition of another. If we made no allowances for changes in points of view, the whole history of our Imperial relations in South Africa would seem to be merely a record of the absurd freaks of idiots or madmen. Looking back over the history of the hundred years which have elapsed since we first obtained a footing in South Africa, we find neither coherence nor continuity in the British policy; we do not find it there because it never existed. No statesman was ever so foolish as to have done deliberately and with knowledge, as part of a systematic policy, what

most of the individual statesmen to whom the destinies of South Africa have been entrusted, admittedly and demonstrably have done. Under our system of party Government, the man in possession of office voices—to use a disagreeable but convenient expression—the public opinion of the moment. It is not very easy to define what public opinion exactly is, yet everyone who is subject to its influence is painfully conscious of its existence, and is in little doubt as to its general drift and tendency. Public opinion represents either the direct impressions of a large number of people formed on the best data available by them, or it stands for the impressions which a few men of influence, or even one man, may succeed in conveying to a large number of people who have not the means or the industry necessary to form a judgment of their own. In either case these impressions are the result of contemplating any given set of phenomena from a certain point of view. The survey may have been made from an attitude which precludes the apprehension of all details, or it may have been made from a position so close to the object under examination that a sense of perspective has been absolutely impossible.

Naturally, the ideal way of studying so complicated a phenomenon as a question of public policy is to look at the subject from every possible position from which a view is obtainable. History, however, bears emphatic testimony to the fact that this counsel of perfection has rarely been put in practice. There always has been, and apparently always will be, some one position, not by any means necessarily the same for very long, from which we are all invited to contemplate the scene before us. The exceeding high mountain from the top of which we are induced to inspect the affairs of mankind is found now in one range and now in another, and the view from the summit is never twice the same. It is necessary to bear this lesson in mind in studying the history of British South Africa during the last century, unless we are to judge with unwarrantable harshness the conduct of each and all of the public men who have presided over the Colonial Office. If we note upon the map of human life the exact position from which different sets of our predecessors viewed the world, we shall be able approximately

to *orient* ourselves, as the French say, and to understand much that seems unintelligible, and to believe more that seems incredible.

Our first association with Cape Colony, which at the close of the eighteenth century was all that was meant by South Africa, occurred at the time of the French Revolution, and was, indeed, the result of that convulsion. It would be a great mistake to imagine that the ideas which found expression in the French Revolution had their sole origin in France, or that their influence was confined to France. Michelet, in his glorification of the French Revolution, says with much truth: 'Le monde pense, la France parle.' The world had for many years before the French Revolution been thinking a good deal, and not thinking very wisely or very correctly. If Voltaire was the intellectual ancestor of the Revolution, Jean Jacques Rousseau was its sentimental author. The famous proposition which forms the basis of the 'Social Contract' that 'man was born free, but is everywhere in chains,' was a sublime falsehood, and as nearly as possible inverted the natural order of things. None the less, however, the conclusions drawn from this false proposition had consequences which were felt in every civilized country in the world. One of them directly affected British public opinion, and therefore British policy. The idea that man was born free naturally suggests the inference that the nearer man was to his primitive state, the purer would be his natural qualities, and the more exempt from the vices derived from civilization. To this period belongs the conception of the noble savage whose mind was as uncontaminated by the conventions of civilized society as his body was exempt from the clothing and trappings which that civilization sought to inflict upon it. It was argued with childlike simplicity that, just as the nude products of the Greek sculptors were infinitely more sublime than the clothed beauties, male and female, of the day, so the naked mind of the savage would be found to possess a purity and simplicity which civilization had destroyed in the cultured world. The delusion extended far into the nineteenth century, and brought in its train blessings as well as curses. The men and women, or at least the majority of them, who passionately advocated the

abolition of slavery had never visited a country in which slavery was recognised. The emancipated slave who was brought to England occupied the same momentary position in English society as was accorded at one time to Garibaldi, and at another to Buffalo Bill. So far as this point of view led to the abolition of slavery, it was on the whole good; but it had other developments entirely mischievous, from the effects of which we have not escaped to-day. Chief amongst them was the belief that, where white men and coloured men were brought into contact, the white man became invariably a fiend, who took a depraved pleasure in inflicting torture upon the primitive savage, who was his superior in moral qualities. That was the point of view from which the statesman of the beginning of the nineteenth century approached the South African problem. It was unfortunate for the future of that country that the religious views of the Franco-Dutch settlers on the subject of slavery lent colour to this delusion. The Boers believed then, as they believe now, that the natives were descendants of Ham, and that in the scheme of creation they were intended to serve either as the plague which chastised white men for their sins, or the instruments placed at their disposal by a considerate Providence to perform those menial duties which the fall of Adam had imposed upon the whole race. It is quite untrue to assert that the Boers indulged in wanton cruelty towards the natives out of sheer love of cruelty. It is equally impossible to deny that they displayed great brutality in their dealings with them. But if we assume, as we are warranted in assuming, that the average Boer regarded the 'nigger' in exactly the same light as the average Englishman looks upon his horse or his dog, then it is safe to say that the cases of wanton cruelty to the natives on the part of Boers in South Africa were not more numerous or more flagrant than cases of brutality to animals by Englishmen during the same period. Again it was a question of point of view. As a matter of fact, the institution of slavery in South Africa was an amelioration rather than an aggravation of the lot of natives who came under their authority.[1]

[1] There is a very modern instance of this which concerns England. When the Uganda Railway was begun, the manual labour employed was that of the

At the same time, it is impossible to deny that the treatment of the natives by the Boers was bad. Thompson, for instance, whom Dr. Theal himself cites as an impartial witness in contradistinction to Barrow, says:[1]

Were it possible to trace the gradual extinction of the Hottentots as a nation within the boundaries of the colony by the progress of European civilization and encroachment, the detail would, unfortunately, not have even the charm of novelty to give interest to it. The same acts of rapacity and cruelty which marked the progress of the Spaniard in Mexico and Peru, and of the Englishman in North America, have merely been acted over again by the Dutchmen in South Africa. The superior force, enterprise, and address, and still more the dissemination of the worst vices, of their conquerors have produced their usual effects, till the numerous tribes, whose habits are detailed with such disgusting accuracy by their matter-of-fact historian Kolben, and with so much poetic license by the enthusiastic Vaillant, have been gradually driven from the kraal to the bush or amalgamated with the general mass of the servile coloured population.

It is true that Thompson adds:

Justice and humanity array our feelings on the side of the invaded people, and God forbid that I should palliate the violation of either of those sacred principles; but when we cannot approve the means, it is at least some consolation to find that the result has been the improvement of the frame of society, and I have seen quite enough of savage life to be convinced that for the Hottentot huts of Kolben's picture the Hottentot square[2] of my map is no bad substitute; nor does Vaillant's truly French description of Pampoen Kraal raise in me the least desire to see that terrestrial paradise repeopled by its primitive inhabitants.

The severity with which unruly slaves were treated is illustrated by the Slave Code drawn up by Governor Ryk Tulbagh in 1752. This Governor, of whom Dr. Theal speaks

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slaves of Mohammedan contractors. The slave was a valuable asset to his master, and he was well fed and well treated, and if he fell sick was carefully tended in hospital. Public opinion in England, however, was so opposed to anything which could be construed into a recognition of slavery, even when it was, as in the case of the Zanzibari and others, a racial institution, that a clamour was successfully raised against the employment of slave labour. The result was hardly satisfactory from a humanitarian point of view. Coolies were hired by the contractors to do the work which had hitherto been performed by slaves; the supply of coolies was virtually unlimited. The contractor had no other interest in them than that of extorting as much work at as low a wage as was possible. If the coolie fell sick he was left to his fate, and another imported to take his place. Nobody was interested in his moral and material well-being, and he was left to struggle with the inexorable law of Nature implied in the phrase 'the survival of the fittest,' and the consequence was that the mortality bills were very high, but the great principle of freedom was vindicated.

[1] 'Travels in South Africa,' p. 381.

[2] *I.e.*, the side of the trilateral building occupied by slaves.

alternately as 'the good old Dutch Governor' and 'good old Father Tulbagh,' prescribed that—

Any male or female slave who should raise his or her hand, though without weapons, against master or mistress, was condemned to death without mercy. Every slave found at the entrance of a church when the congregation was leaving was to be severely flogged by the ministers of justice. Any slave, big or little, found within a churchyard at the time of a funeral was to be severely flogged. Not more than ten pairs of slaves at the most should follow the corpse of a dead slave to its burial, the number to be regulated by the rank of the owner of the deceased in the Honourable Company, by whom a fine equal to five pounds was to be paid if the rule was transgressed.[1]

Good old Tulbagh, it is true, treated his white subordinates with little greater respect.

In his day every man was supposed to uncover his head as he passed Government House, whether His Excellency was at home or not, and it was the special occupation of certain dames, wives of men high in office, to sit invisible behind the window-blinds to take note of passers-by who neglected the obsequious bow to the unseen magnate. 'No one below the rank of a junior merchant, and the wives and daughters of those only who are, or who have been, members of any council, shall venture to use umbrellas.' Another law restricted the use of embroidered silk dresses to the wives of junior merchants, while no woman, married or single, without distinction, was allowed, whether in mourning or out of mourning, to wear dresses with a train, under a penalty of twenty-five rixdollars. . . . It was required that every person, without exception, should stop his carriage and get out of it when he saw the Governor approach, and to likewise get out of the way so as to allow a convenient passage to the carriage of any of the Court of Policy.[2]

A passage from one of Lady Anne Barnard's letters illustrates the relations of masters and mistresses with their slaves.

The Landdrost (she says,[3] writing to Henry Dundas) was called away the beginning of dinner one day to talk to an old man and old woman who had come together. They detained him long. At last, when he returned, he told us it was an affair of jealousy, founded on what often takes place in this country—the partiality of the master to one of his black slaves; that all was amicably settled, as he had consented to sell the object of contention. He had not had two mouthfuls when another message came from the husband to the effect that, there being a sale in Hottentot Holland next day, he begged leave to sell her then. The Landdrost gave permission, thinking his hurry a proof that the man knew his own weakness, and was resolved to put future error out of his power. Two more mouthfuls were not swallowed when the wife came back, and off the Landdrost was again. 'Come,' said I, 'I'll lay a rupee on old Sarah's head that she means to be generous, and, since her husband is ready to

[1] *Macmillan's Magazine*, September, 1901, p. 399. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 398.
[3] 'South Africa a Century Ago,' p. 136.

sell the bond-woman to satisfy her, that she is now willing to let her and Ishmael remain.' The gentlemen shook their heads, but no one took my bet, as the appearance was in my favour. At last the Landdrost returned, and we eagerly inquired the old lady's business. 'Only to persuade me to give her leave to whip Hagar,' said he, 'before she is sold.' 'Oh, damn her!' cried Mr. Barnard. 'Amen,' said I; 'but I hope you did not consent?' 'No no,' said he; 'I thought the concession of selling her quite enough, and refused her revengeful request.'

I hear since that, instead of having sold her, she has brought her to Cape Town and put her into the Fiscal's prison, in hopes of obtaining, from his ignorance of the matter, the general permission to whip her ill-behaved slave. But the Fiscal does not condemn so slightly. He inquired into the merits of the case, and poor Hagar has once more escaped her licking, but is to be sold incontinently.

It is not pretended that solicitude for the condition of the nigger had anything to do with the annexation of Cape Colony. The first point of view was a reasonable one. The Stadholder of Holland, who was then a refugee in England, a large number of his subjects having espoused the principles of the French Revolution, had made over to us his rights in the Cape Colony till such time as he should come by his own again. His object in making this transfer and ours in accepting it was to prevent the halfway house to India from falling into the hands of the French, as it otherwise must have done, since the Batavian Republic was merely a French province. The value of Cape Colony seems to have been only vaguely appreciated by the authorities at home, and during the period of our first occupation there was a general impression that we should retire from South Africa. Lady Anne Barnard, writing on October 15, 1797, says:

Newspapers have reached us in plenty, though nothing else. A peace talked of as daily likely to take place meets here with universal belief. The Cape to be ceded as one article is almost universally believed by the Dutch, and terms little to the honour of England have been named as necessary to be complied with by us in order to effect a peace which was supposed to be called loud for by the country.[1]

A month later she is narrating a visit that her husband paid officially to Stellenbosch:

Next morning our Jacobins arrived, stout, sulky, democratic fellows, who, with wives and children, preferred refusing the oath of allegiance and going to Batavia, to swearing to be honest and quiet members of the community, taking up no arms against us. There was now nothing further to be done. The Landdrost and Mr. Barnard had argued with them till

[1] 'South Africa a Century Ago,' p. 94.

both were worn out with vexation and fatigue. The dragoons then appeared, and the five men escorted by them were carried prisoners to the Cape, fully expecting, as a Dutch servant of ours told me who stood by them, to be set at liberty on arriving there, and the matter to blow over. The villagers in general disapproved of their conduct, and the lady Landdrost, with tears in her eyes, said, 'How can you justify yourselves to your wives and children for this?' But their reason was plain. Fully persuaded that the Government of the Cape will not remain long in the hands of the English, they are taking grounds to be great men when the French get possession of it. But they may reckon without their host if they think the French are bound by any tie except what they suppose ot be for their own interest.

This recurring uncertainty, as described by Lady Anne a hundred years ago, illustrates one of the difficulties which we have to face in the beginning of the twentieth century. In another letter she says:[1]

Commissary Pringle told me just now that he had been advertising for a contractor to build chaff-houses, or some sort of public store for such matters as fall within his department. This has thrown the Dutch into great astonishment! '*Mon Dieu!* the English, then, believe they still are to keep the Cape.' Not one of the Dutch believes it, and even amongst those of the English who treat everything serious lightly bets are laid of five to one that the place is ceded on a peace.[2]

It was to Barrow, perhaps, more than to anyone else that we owe it that, when the short-lived Peace of Amiens came to an end, we determined to reconquer and permanently retain the halfway house to India.[3]

Before I pass on to notice Barrow's contributions to the ultimate decision, it may be well to cite the advice given by the shrewd and observant lady whose letters I have just been quoting:

Wise and worldly people (she says, in a letter to Dundas dated November 29, 1797[4]) are always afraid of committing to paper opinions respecting anything beyond the merest trifles, unless they foresee events. I, for instance, was I to treat you like a Minister instead of a man and a friend, would not send you off my details of the Cape, nor say what I think of it, till I knew whether it was to be kept by us or not. In the last case, it would be flattering to speak highly in its praise, in the first to hold it light; but this is not a fit way of dealing between you and me. I must therefore conclude by saying that I hope it will be found possible to keep the Cape; that, barren and ill-cultivated as it now is, it strikes both Mr.

[1] 'South Africa a Century Ago,' p. 140.

[2] As a matter of fact it was so ceded at the Peace of Amiens.

[3] Such importance did Napoleon attach to the strategic value of the Cape peninsula that he made its retrocession to the Batavian Republic, which was practically a dependency of France, a *sine qua non* of the cessation of hostilities.

[4] 'South Africa a Century Ago,' pp. 142, 143.

Barnard and me to have great powers in itself to become one of the finest countries in the world.[1] How far it will be the wisdom of England to encourage it to become so is for England's Sovereign and his Ministers to determine. Whether it will be more for England's advantage, and that of our possessions in India, to keep it subordinate, so that it may never interfere, while it aids and assists the to-and-fro constantly going on between England and India, is for you to determine, and you only. The choice climate and fertile soil here might certainly make it a second India, but whether in that point of view Ceylon might not be a better *pis aller*, supposing anything to go wrong with us in the East, is a point I have heard questioned. If the world was at peace, and was I a monarch, I should like to portion a younger son with the Cape, supposing him little, for a ten years' minority would produce a vast difference in this country if it was as much encouraged as it has been repressed. Yet it is possible (if we keep it) that you may be obliged from policy to adhere to the same selfish considerations which governed the Dutch. The most enlightened of the inhabitants complain of the late régime. Their hands were tied up from being possessed of the riches they might so easily have enjoyed from their industry. They tell me there is nothing this place is not equal to, particularly if we can suppose the intercourse between the inner parts of the country and Cape Town rendered more easy. It is certainly a healthy climate.

No doubt, however, it was to the remarkably able report of John Barrow that the determination of the English Ministry was ultimately due. I know of no official report the conclusions of which have been so completely borne out as those which Barrow sets forth in the report which was expanded into the two handsome quarto volumes published in 1806. Henry Dundas had, indeed, laid it down in a minute quoted by Barrow:

That no foreign Power, directly or indirectly, should obtain possession of the Cape of Good Hope, for that it was the *physical guarantee of the British territories in India.*[2]

And, indeed, as early as 1787[3] Dundas had proposed to the Dutch

The cession of certain stations in India, which were to them of little weight either in a political or commercial point of view. The reasoning employed on this occasion was 'that the Cape was invaluable in the hands of a maritime power, being really and truly the key to India, which no

[1] Herein the lady displays a keener insight even than did Barrow, for he, after asserting that 'as a naval and military station connected with the protection and defence of our trade and possessions in India, the advantages of the Cape are invaluable,' concludes: 'As a mere territorial possession it is not in its present state, and probably never could become by any legislation, a colony worthy of the consideration either of Great Britain or any other Power' ('Travels in Africa,' vol. ii., p. 352).

[2] The italics are either Dundas' or Barrow's.

[3] 'Barrow's Travels,' vol., ii. 171.

hostile fleet could pass or repass, as the length of the previous voyage, either from India or Europe, must have disabled such a fleet, in a certain degree, before it could reach the Cape; that it was the interest of Holland itself that the Cape and Trincomalee should belong to Great Britain, because Holland must either be the ally of Britain or of France in India, and because Great Britain only can be a useful ally of Holland in the East; that the Dutch were not able to protect their settlements in that quarter, and Britain fully competent to their protection—that the Cape and Tricomalee were not commercial establishments, and that the maintenance of them was burthensome and expensive to the Dutch, but that the force required to protect the British Indian possessions would render the defence of the Dutch settlements much less so to Britain.

And Lord Macartney, in a letter to Dundas of ten years' later date, which is cited by Barrow,[1] says:

The French—who, to speak of them in the language of truth and experience, and not in the jargon of pretended cosmopolites, are, and ever must be, our natural enemies—can only wish to have the Cape either in their own hands or in those of a weak Power, that they may use it as an instrument towards our destruction, as a channel for pouring through it an irresistible deluge upon our Indian possessions to the southward of the Guadavery. Of this I am so perfectly convinced, that if it shall be found impracticable for us to retain the sovereignty of the Cape, and the French are to become the masters of it, either *per se aut per alium*, then we must totally alter our present system, and adopt such measures as will shut them out of India entirely, and render the possession of the Cape and of the Isles of France and Bourbon of as little use to them as possible.

Nothing could furnish a better proof of Barrow's insight and sagacity than the passage in which he reviews the designs of the French of that period.[2]

In the first place (he says) it may be considered as a general principle that has long been rooted in the French Government, and from which it is likely never to depart, to aim at the overthrow of our power in India, and to endeavour to erect upon its ruins an empire of their own. To accomplish this point, and, in consequence thereof, in the language of the present Corsican ruler, 'to strike a blow at England which will be followed up with its complete destruction,' they know there are but two roads to take: the one by getting possession of Egypt and Syria, where they might collect and season their troops for the grand expedition, either by sea or land, the other by occupying the Cape of Good Hope. Knowing the latter to be a desperate attempt, they were induced to make an experiment on the former.

The importance which the French have attached to this half-way station between Europe and India appears from the conferences which took place between Lord Malmesbury and Monsieur De la Croix, wherein the latter persisted that the Cape of Good Hope was of infinitely greater importance to England than the Netherlands were to France, and that if our demands for keeping it were acquiesced in, it should be considered as a full and ample compensation for them. 'If,' says he, 'you are masters of the Cape and Trincomalee, we shall hold all our settle-

[1] 'Barrow's Travels,' vol ii., p. 172.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

ments in India and the Isles of France and Bourbon entirely at the tenure of your will and pleasure : they will be ours only as long as you choose we should retain them. You will be sole masters in India, and we shall be entirely dependent on you.' . . .

It is not probable that France will ever be able to make any impression on India but by the assistance of a fleet, and it must be our own fault if we allow them any such fleet in the Eastern Seas, as by our possessing the Cape she must find it utterly impracticable to assemble, much more to victual and store, any such fleet. The want of a suitable place to refresh at must render every attempt to cope with us in those seas abortive. So well were they aware in the late war[1] of the futility of any expedition from the Isles of France and Bourbon without the assistance of the Cape of Good Hope that they preferred the fatal experiment of colonizing Egypt, in the hope, perhaps, of proceeding at some future time by the Red Sea to India. They knew that, even if they had succeeded in getting out to these islands a sufficient number of ships and troops, yet without the supplies which they have usually on such occasions drawn from the Cape, any such expedition must necessarily here have ended.

The necessity of occupying points of vantage or of preventing rivals from acquiring them was practically the only consideration which influenced Kings and statesmen, and, for that matter, public opinion, in the rectification of frontiers. The idea of consulting the wishes or prejudices of the inhabitants of territories distributed at Congresses is of very much later date. A great deal is made by Boer champions of the fact that the King of Holland bartered his possessions in South Africa to England for a sum of money without consulting the settlers of Franco-Dutch origin. But it may well be asked in reply whether such a consideration as the wishes of the inhabitants entered into the minds of the plenipotentiaries who elaborated the treaty of 1814 which was for so many years the charter of Europe and the guarantee for peace. The protest of an outraged nationality was an afterthought, of which we find no trace till British intervention in the settlement or unsettlement of the native problem produced a schism between the two white races, which has never been bridged over. The white population all told at the time of the final annexation of the Cape did not amount to more than 20,000 men, women, and children, and it is an absurdity to imagine that the majority of these were passionately attached to their connection with Holland, or that the intelligent among them ever believed it possible to maintain themselves as an independent Republic. The revolutionary

[1] Barrow is writing after the Peace of Amiens.

spirit seemed to have been practically confined to the district of Graaff Reinet, which in the days of the Dutch East India Company, as now, was always the centre of disaffection. As Lady Anne Barnard says:[1]

> While all goes fair and well with you in England, we have got our little bit of insurrection here at a distant part of the country—Graaf Reinet. The old bad news, I suppose (and none of the modern good yet), has travelled there, and inspired the Boers with the desire of kicking up a dust and trying if they can't be masters still. . . . These Graaf Reinet Boers have always been turbulent and unwilling to bend to any laws or to the Landdrost. They particularly dislike their Landdrost, a very good sort of man, I hear, and affect to think themselves ill-used, now that they are British subjects, in not having an English Landdrost. But I believe this is a mere pretext to get rid of the present one.

And she significantly writes a little later:

> The original complaint of the Boers made against Fause (Faure), the Landdrost of Graaf Reinet, was that he was a favourer of 'heathens,' and had been known to sustain the Hottentots' cause against the Dutch master.

And we learn from Barrow, writing during the brief career of the Batavian Republic,[2] that

> Recent accounts mention the deplorable state of the colony under its new government. The revenues are so reduced as to be totally inadequate to meet the expenses of the garrison, and they have no hope of any supply from Holland. New taxes were imposed on the inhabitants, which they refused to pay. The people detested the Government, and the Government was afraid of the troops. The garrison was in a complete state of insubordination; several were under trial for mutiny, and numbers were daily deserting with their arms. Universal discontent and general distress prevailed. All credit was at an end, money had totally disappeared, the little commerce they had was destroyed, bankruptcies were without number, and a war was only wanting to complete their misery. Under such circumstances it is not unreasonable to conclude that the Cape will fall an easy conquest to a British force.

We gather further, from a passage immediately preceding that which I have quoted, some idea not only of the weakness of the Dutch from a military point of view, but also their ideas with regard to the Hottentot corps, which, originally raised by them, had been increased and organized by British officers:

> The Dutch garrison (he says)[3] at the evacuation of the colony by the English in March, 1803, were certainly not capable of opposing any

[1] 'South Africa a Century Ago,' p. 207.
[2] 'Barrow's Travels in Southern Africa,' vol. ii., p. 237. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

extraordinary resistance, or to defend the place against a spirited attack conducted by an officer of skill and local experience, and their numbers since that time have been considerably reduced. . . . The whole garrison, when complete, was intended to consist of 3,000 men. Of these were already arrived at that time barely 2,000, consisting in a regiment of the Prince of Waldec, about 600 strong, 300 cavalry, 300 artillery, two or three companies of grenadiers, and the rest *jagers*, or a light rifle corps, totally undisciplined, and composed of almost every nation on the face of the earth, being for the most part deserters from German regiments. And with regard to artillery, they were so miserably defective that, out of the whole corps, they could not select a sufficient number of trained men to fire the salutes intended to be made on hoisting the Dutch flag on the 1st of January, but made application to the commanding officer of the British artillery for a party to assist them; yet when the orders for the surrender of the colony were countermanded, and it became a probable event that hostilities would ensue, it was industriously circulated by the Dutch officers, or, rather, by the French officers nominally in the Dutch service, that their corps of artillery was in the highest state of discipline and order, the greater part of the men having distinguished themselves at the Battle of Marengo! They were commanded, however, as well as the cavalry, by active and intelligent officers. . . .

The Hottentot corps, consisting of about 500 men, so far from feeling any disposition to enter into the service of the Dutch, actually declined it, and expressed the strongest wishes to return to their connections in the distant parts of the colony. What may be the fate of these poor creatures under their old masters is difficult to conjecture. Convinced as the Dutch Government would speedily be that they would never be prevailed on to draw a trigger against the English,[1] it will become a very serious difficulty in what manner to dispose of them. If they should desert in a body, which was generally thought would be the event, they would drive in the whole country. But if, before this happens, the humane colonists should succeed in obtaining the prayer of two petitions presented by them, the Government will be relieved from any apprehensions with regard to the Hottentot corps, one of which was to surround and massacre the whole corps, the other to put a chain to the leg of every man and distribute them among the farmers as slaves for life.

The only chance they have of escaping rests upon the good intentions of the Governor and Commander-in-Chief[2] towards them, from whose humane disposition and honourable character they will receive every protection and support—as far, at least, as depends upon him; but in a revolutionary Government the best disposed must in some degree swim with the torrent of public opinion.

It is therefore clear that no very serious outrage was done to the sentiment of nationalities by our annexation of the Cape Colony; but regard for 'nationalities,' which Mr. Sidney Webb has recently described as a Fenian idea, was not then entertained by anybody. The point of view which prevailed in 1814 was the sage if selfish notion of securing for one's own country as many valuable strategic places as

[1] As a matter of fact they fought us valiantly.
[2] Governor Janssens.

possible. The only difference between the British method of acquisition and that of her rivals was that she honestly paid for what she acquired, and paid it to those to whom, according to the ideas of the times, it was honestly due. Nor is there reason to believe that, until the next point of view rose from beneath the horizon, the Dutch inhabitants were at all dissatisfied with their change of rulers.

The advent of peace in Europe, after nearly a generation of armed conflict, gave an opportunity for the revival of the sentimental political ideas which were due to the doctrines of Rousseau. They had been in abeyance while the war-drum was beating in every quarter of the world. Even in the midst of the Napoleonic wars, Wilberforce had achieved the memorable victory which won emancipation for the slave as soon as he set foot on English soil, and branded traffic in human beings as not only immoral but illegal.

By the year 1814 (says Mr. Fyffe[1]) the utterances of public opinion were so loud and urgent that the Government, though free from enthusiasm itself, was forced to place the international prohibition of the slave trade in the front rank of its demands.[2] There were politicians on the Continent credulous enough to believe that this outcry of the heart and conscience of the nation was but a piece of commercial hypocrisy. Talleyrand, with far different insight, but not with more sympathy, spoke of the state of the English people as one of frenzy. Something had already been effected at foreign Courts. Sweden had been led to prohibit slave traffic in 1813, Holland in the following year. Portugal had been restrained by treaty from trading north of the line. France had pledged itself in the first Treaty of Paris to abolish the commerce within five years. Spain alone remained unfettered, and it was indeed intolerable that the English slavers should have been forced to abandon their execrable gains only that they should fall into the hands of the subjects of King Ferdinand. . . . It was hoped by the English people that Castlereagh would succeed in obtaining a universal and immediate prohibition of the slave trade by all the Powers assembled at Vienna. The Minister was not wanting in perseverance,[3] but he failed to achieve this result. France, while claiming a short delay elsewhere, professed itself willing, like Portugal, to abolish at once this traffic north of the line; but the Government on which England had perhaps the greatest claim, that of Spain, absolutely refused to accept these restrictions, or to bind itself to the final prohibition before the end of eight years. Castlereagh then proposed that a council of Ambassadors at London and Paris should be charged with the international duty of expediting the close of the slave trade, the measure which he had in view being the punishment of slave-dealing States by a general exclusion of their exports. Against this Spain and Portugal made a formal protest, treating the threat as almost equivalent to one of war. The project dropped, and the Minister of England

[1] 'Modern Europe,' vol. ii., p. 74. [2] At the Congress of Vienna.

[3] *Cf.* also the Wellington Despatches during the period of the Duke's mission to Paris, 1814-1815.

had to content himself with obtaining from the Congress a solemn condemnation of the slave trade as contrary to the principles of civilization and human right (February, 1815).

For another eighteen years the struggle for the absolute emancipation of slaves was carried on by Great Britain, until the country demonstrated not only its enthusiasm, but its sincerity, by devoting no less than £15,000,000 for the redemption of slaves within British territory; but though the final triumph was deferred, the interest in the moral and material welfare of the negro was never allowed to languish in this country. The missionary (the special object of Dr. Theal's antipathy, especially if he happened to be an Englishman), was the natural instrument which recommended itself to the negrophile for the protection of the coloured man against the brutal white oppressor. Missionaries were by no means an innovation in the Cape. The Dutch East India Company, which took but a scanty interest in the temporal welfare of the settlers, could not be charged with neglecting their spiritual needs. In a totally different sense to that in which Canning used the words, 'They called the new world into existence to redress the balance of the old.' It is hardly necessary to say that their thoughtfulness for the welfare of souls extended itself only to those who, in Dutch opinion, possessed them—the men with white skins. They established a new Calvinism, and tolerated or did not tolerate other sects according to the liberality or narrowness of particular Governors. It was not until 1780 that the Lutherans, whose dogmas at any rate differed so little from those of Calvin, were allowed to have a church and clergymen of their own. This boon was granted as a matter of expediency to conciliate the German element in the population, but it was qualified by the condition that the minister selected must be a Dutchman and be appointed by the Lutheran Church of Amsterdam. The work of proselytizing amongst the natives, which to the Dutch was not only supererogatory but pernicious, was left to the Moravians.[1] The United Brethren, as they called

[1] We find in Lady Anne Barnard's letters a proof that the Dutch farmers were very ill-disposed towards those Moravian missionaries of whom Dr. Theal cannot speak too highly. In her journal for May 10, 1798, she gives an account of a visit paid to the Moravian establishment near the Droopkelder or Stalactite

themselves, derived their name from their spiritual capital in Moravia from which they were driven at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Mr. Lucas does not exaggerate their claims to the respect of mankind when he says of them:[1]

The trials they had known seemed to nerve them for more, and from this small centre in a Lutheran land[2] missionaries went out to the uttermost parts of the earth. In the tropical heat of the West Indies they laboured amongst the slaves. They founded mission-stations in Greenland and on the ice-bound coasts of Labrador. Self-denying, uncomplaining, very practical in their goodness, backed by no powerful Church, working with no pomp or show, wherever there is love of God or man, the Moravian missionaries should be held in honour. One of them, by name George Schmidt, went to South Africa. His Protestant principles had lately earned him six years' imprisonment in a Bohemian dungeon, and might have insured him a warm welcome in a Protestant land. Welcomed he was when he first arrived in 1737 and began mission-work among the Hottentots on the Zonderend River, to the east of Stellenbosch. For five years he taught the natives religion and industry, 'setting them the example, and working at their side in the gardens and fields'; but offence was given when he administered the rite of baptism, and he found himself regarded as an interloper and a heretic. Early in 1744 he sailed for Europe, hoping to return with full authority from Amsterdam, but the representations made on his behalf were made in vain, and South Africa saw him no more. It was the old story of monopoly. His was not the Company's form of worship. His ministry was not duly authorized.

Fifty years later the Moravians despatched another mission to South Africa, which this time (1792) was authorized 'to convert the heathen and to administer the Sacraments.'

It was (continues Mr. Lucas) almost exclusively among the Hottentots

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Caves. 'The fathers,' she says, 'of whom there were three, came out to meet us in their working jackets, each man being employed in following the business of his original profession—miller, smith, carpenter, and tailor in one. They welcomed us simply and frankly, and led us into their house, which was built with their own hands five years ago. They told us they were sent by the Moravian Church in Germany; that their object was to convert the Hottentots and render them industrious, religious, and happy; that they had spent some time in looking out for a proper situation, sheltered, of a good soil, and near water; that they had found it here, and had procured some Hottentots to assist them in the beginning of the work, and by this treatment of them had gradually encouraged more to creep round them. . . . Their position, they told us, was one of great danger, for the Boers disliked them for having taken the Hottentots away from the necessity of laborious servitude, and "over and over again" they told us "the farmers had made plots to murder us. The last plot, which was to shoot us with poisoned arrows, we discovered, and were able to prevent." Mr. Barnard was very much interested in this, and promised to speak to the Governor to see what was best to be done for their security.'

[1] 'History of South Africa,' p. 113.

[2] They had taken refuge at Herrnhut in Saxony.

that the Moravians laboured in the early days of their mission. Like the Jesuits in America, they dealt with the natives under their charge as with children, and the Hottentots were no more than children in their want of steadiness and perseverance, in their incapacity to stand alone. Holding aloof from party strife, in no way interfering in politics, the brethren and their wives worked soberly and sensibly, supplementing religious by secular work, teaching the children to read, the women to sew, the men to build houses and till gardens, to use their heads and their hands. None could say of the Moravians that they did not know their own business, and few could say that they did not mind it.[1]

The English missionaries were not behindhand in the duty. It was on November 4, 1794, that the London Missionary Society held its first preliminary meeting in London. It was non-sectarian in character, and was supported by Churchmen and Nonconformists alike, and comprised amongst its most active agents members of different nationalities. In 1795 the society was duly organized, and it was in the same year that the British forces first occupied Cape Colony. Three years later the society sent its first missionary to South Africa. It is significant, especially in view of the malignant criticism of Dr. Theal, that the society, with a tact which missionary organizations do not always display, selected a Dutchman, Dr. Vanderkemp, to head the mission. Their arrival in South Africa, in one respect, at any rate, brought not peace, but a sword. Their reports—true or untrue, exaggerated or accurate—of the relations subsisting between the whites and blacks stimulated the fervour of the negrophilistic party in England, and undoubtedly contributed to the racial antipathy which has never died out. I have dealt in a subsequent chapter with some of the aspects of the controversy which raged around the behaviour of the Dutch colonists to the coloured race. I would only say here that a great deal of misunderstanding has been caused by the confusion of the purchased slaves with the native population hired out to the colonists. The much-abused Dr. Philip has some very sensible remarks on this subject:

The common observer will soon remark in South Africa a considerable difference in the feelings of the colonists towards the natives and the slaves. The slaves are often regarded by the farmers with the feelings

[1] For an interesting picture of the Moravian mission, see Lady Anne Barnard's letters, from which I have already quoted, especially the diary for May 10, 1798 ('South Africa a Century Ago,' pp. 166-170).

they cherish towards the other part of the livestock on their farms; but the natives are too often viewed as a kind of vermin merely, which are to be tolerated because they are useful in grubbing up others of a more destructive nature. These feelings towards the natives are not confined to the Dutch colonists, but frequently manifest themselves as strongly in English gentlemen who have been but a few years in the country as they do in the oldest inhabitant. This spirit of animosity against the natives in vulgar minds may be easily accounted for, but it is so little under the influence of any known rule that it is often as powerful, and I may perhaps add as whimsical, in its appearance in the minds of the educated classes of society as in those of the rude and illiterate. Expressing my surprise one day that a gentleman who was an Englishman, and an officer in the British Army, and who then filled a civil office in the colony, should act with so much barbarity to the natives, the gentleman to whom I made the observation, and who had been an officer in the same regiment, remarked, 'I am not at all surprised at the circumstances to which you advert, and which I know to be true. He is a good family man; he is very kind-hearted to the colonists, and when he was in the Cape regiment he used to dote upon every Hottentot who wore the uniform of the regiment, but he never could endure the sight of a Hottentot who was not a soldier.' Few minds have strength enough to rise above the contempt thrown upon a people by invidious and odious regulations, and the difference between the Hottentot under our army regulations and the same people under the degrading regulations to which they are subject in their colonial bondage may have given rise to this peculiar state of mind. To the Hottentot soldier he would attach the ideas associated with British valour; with the Hottentot bondman he would associate the feelings of contempt.[1]

Barrow himself, whose denunciations of the cruelty with which the Boers treated the natives have exposed him to the censure of Dr. Theal, bears testimony to the well-being of the slave while inveighing against the practice of slavery.

In full possession (he says) of all the vices that must infallibly result from the condition of slavery, there is yet no part of the world where the domestic slaves of every description are so well treated and so much trusted as at the Cape of Good Hope. They are better clothed, better fed, and infinitely more comfortable, than any of the peasantry of Europe. Yet such are the bad effects which the condition of slavery produces on the mind, that they are incapable of feeling the least spark of gratitude for good and gentle usage, whilst under the severe hand of a rigid and cruel master they become the best of slaves.[2]

Of the field slaves, he says, further on, that they are not

nearly so well treated as those of the town, yet infinitely better than the Hottentots who are in the farmer's employ. The farmer, indeed, having a life interest in the one, and only twenty-five years' in the other, is a circumstance which may explain the difference of treatment. The one, also, is convertible property, an advantage to which they have not yet succeeded in their attempts to turn the other. The country slaves, notwithstanding,

[1] 'Researches in South Africa,' vol. ii., p. 314.
[2] 'Travels in Southern Africa,' vol. ii., p. 94.

are ill-fed, ill-clothed, work extremely hard, and are frequently punished with the greatest severity, sometimes with death when rage gets the better of prudence and compassion.

Those who would care to read the cruelties of which the Boers were capable towards the natives may satisfy a curiosity which will soon be revolted by studying Barrow's Transvaal experiences of some of these atrocities.[1] Having given an instance of monstrous barbarity perpetrated upon a Hottentot boy, Barrow goes on to narrate the punishment of the 'author of such unparalleled brutality,' which may be quoted here as illustrating both the attitude of the Boer towards the Hottentot and the indignation he displayed at any interference with his rights over the native. The Hottentot boy in question was only eight years old. He was found

sitting at the corner of the house with a pair of iron rings clenched upon his legs of the weight of 10 or 12 pounds, and they had remained in one situation for such a length of time that they appeared to be sunk into the leg, the muscle being tumefied both above and below the rings. It appeared on inquiry that they had been riveted to his legs more than ten months ago.[2]

According to the Boer who had so maltreated him, the child's offence was trivial.

He had nothing to allege against him but that he had always been a worthless boy, he had lost him so many sheep, he had slept when he ought to watch the cattle, and such-like frivolous charges of a negative kind.

Determined to make an example of the author of such unparalleled brutality, the general (Vandeleur) ordered him instantly to yoke his oxen to his waggon, and, placing the boy by his side, to drive directly to headquarters. Here he gave orders to the farrier of the 8th Regiment of Light Dragoons to strike off the irons from the boy, an operation which required great nicety and attention, and to clench them as tight as he could on the legs of his master. He roared and bellowed in a most violent manner, to the inexpressible satisfaction of the bystanders, and, above all, to that of the little sufferer just relieved from torment. For the whole of the first night his lamentations were incessant. With a stentorian voice a thousand times he vociferated, 'Myn God! is dat een maniere om Christian mensch te handelen?' (My God! is this a way to treat a Christian?) His, however, were not the agonies of bodily pain, but the bursts of rage and resentment on being put on a level with one, as the Boers call them, of the *Zwarte Natie*, between whom and the *Christian mensch* they conceived the difference to be fully as great as between themselves and their cattle, and whom, indeed, they most commonly honour with the appellation of *szwarte vee* (black cattle).

[1] They will be found on page 395 *et seq.* of vol. i. of 'Travels in Southern Africa.'

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 397.

The confusion arising from this classification of Hottentots and domestic slaves in the same category was responsible for fatal errors of judgment at home. It was not altogether unnatural that it should also produce mistaken views of the remedy in the minds of the missionaries. Dr. Philip, in the passage which gave occasion for the footnote I have already quoted, says:

> Contempt and injustice are nearly allied, and as much of the injustice done to the natives has arisen from this cause, one of the first steps on the part of the Government in their favour should be the introduction of such measures as may improve their condition and teach their oppressors to respect them. When it shall be seen that the laws of the colony make no distinction between the proud master and those whom he considers as belonging to an inferior class of beings, the administration of an impartial justice will generate in the breast of the former ideas of a common relationship, and secure for the oppressed a milder treatment.

And we see in a quite erroneous proposition laid down by Dr. Philip[1] the germs of the policy which was to be so productive of future trouble.

> We are all born savages (he says), whether we are brought into the world in the populous city or in the lonely desert. It is the discipline of education and the circumstances under which we are placed which create the difference between the rude barbarian and the polished citizen, the listless savage and the man of commercial enterprise, the man of the woods and the literary recluse. . . . We may see what our ancestors were at the time Julius Cæsar invaded Britain by the present condition of the Caffer tribes of South Africa. It is here where we see as in a mirror the features of our progenitors, and by our own history we may learn the pitch to which such tribes may be elevated by means favourable to their improvement.

It was in this confusion of thought rather than a desire to libel the Dutch colonists that Dr. Philip and his associates flooded England with harrowing narratives of the brutality displayed by whites towards natives. Dr. Theal seeks to create the impression that the missionaries were animated by a spirit of racial antipathy towards the Boer colonists. I can only say that, after a careful but wearisome study of the indictments brought against the colonists by Dr. Philip and others, I am most struck with the impartiality with which they have brought their accusations against white men of all races. Of course, as the Dutch were in the majority in Cape Colony, a larger share of invective falls to their lot. But it

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 316.

is quite certain that the misdoings of English colonists were recorded with equal vehemence by the friends of the native, and the fact that several Dutch ministers—notably Vanderkemp and Kicherer—were amongst the foremost champions of the Kaffir is sufficient guarantee that race feeling between the whites had nothing to do with these charges. The Christian missionary and the political revolutionist start from the same proposition of the equality of man. The proposition is untrue, though, like many false propositions, it may serve within limits as a useful hypothesis; but in practice its unqualified recognition has produced disastrous results. The authors of the French Revolution believed that by adopting the idea of absolute equality as the bedrock of the social and political system they would hasten forward the millennium. What they did effect was, in the first stage, to transfer the power of government, though not its authority, to an irresponsible mob actuated by ignorance, envy, and hatred, and, in the second stage, to hand over the whole machinery of government to a military despotism, the first duty of which was to crush the wielders of power. The missionary, starting from the same proposition — which from a spiritual point of view was unassailable—applied his doctrines to political problems, for which they were altogether unsuitable. In the passage from Dr. Philip which I have quoted, the operation of this fallacy can easily be traced. No proposition can be more demonstrably erroneous than that in which it is laid down that 'it is the discipline of education and the circumstances under which we are placed which create the difference between the rude barbarian and the polished citizen, the listless savage and the man of commercial enterprise, the man of the woods and the literary recluse,' and from these false premises the equally false conclusion is drawn.

Take a number of children (says Dr. Philip) from the nursery, and place them apart, and allow them to grow up without instruction or discipline, and the first state of society into which they would naturally form would be the hunter's state. While food could be obtained by the chase they would never think of cultivating the ground; inured to hardships, they would despise many things which in a civilized state of society are deemed indispensable. In seasons of common danger they would unite their efforts in their own defence; their union, being nothing more than a voluntary association, would be liable to frequent interruptions; the

affairs of their little community would be to them the whole world ; and the range of their thoughts would be limited to the exercise their fears and hopes might have in relation to their individual danger or safety.[1]

The proposition limits the history of the individual to the date of his birth. It does not take into account the physical and mental aptitudes bequeathed from parents to children through many generations. If it were possible to make a trial of Dr. Philip's example, and to take children indiscriminately from the wigwams of the Red Indians and the nurseries of the highest civilized white, and train them together in the backwoods for the hard life of hunters, it would be found that the redskin would hopelessly outclass the child of civilized parentage in all the qualities essential to forest life. The instincts of the hunter would only require development in the young Indian; they would have to be created in the child of the cities, and while development is a matter of years, creation is a question of generations, and often centuries. Exactly similar phenomena would result from the transfer of this mixed nursery from the backwoods to the city, though there, of course, the circumstances would be reversed. The inherited instincts of civilization would soon enable the white child to outstrip his savage companion in the acquirement of every art and faculty which is at once the product and the cause of civilization.

So long as the fallacy obtained which regarded the 'nigger' as the equal of the white man, differing only in the possession of a darker skin and a whiter soul, experiments were certain to be made, which were equally certain to fail. To emancipate the native from slavery, and to give him equality before the law in so far as his limited sense of responsibility admitted it, was obviously a right policy viewed from the standpoints of humanity and expediency, but to entrust him with the social and political privileges which white races had won for themselves through long generations of struggle, not only with others, but with themselves, was to offer him gifts dangerous both to himself and to those who proffered them. The savage left to himself would never have invented fire-water, which he has procured from the white man to his own destruction. It is true, of course, that savage races have

[1] 'Researches in South Africa,' vol. ii., pp. 316, 317.

been found giving themselves over at times to intoxication produced by beverages of their own manufacture, but their orgies have been controlled by tradition and custom, and no primitive race yet discovered has ever produced the hopeless habitual drunkard who is the diminishing product of civilization. The same kind of argument applies to the grant to savage races of the political and social privileges, the right use of which is inherited and not acquired. If it seems superfluous to dilate upon this fallacy at the beginning of the twentieth century, it must be remembered that it operated with disastrous results long past the meridian of the nineteenth century. The emancipation of slaves in America by Abraham Lincoln, was at once humane and expedient, though at the time, and in the manner in which it was effected, it was more an act of policy than of philanthropy. The enfranchisement of the negro, on the other hand, was a political blunder of the first magnitude, which is still embarrassing the United States, and would have embarrassed them still more had not the common-sense of the white race nullified the theoretical errors of the authors of this wanton policy. If so sagacious a statesman as President Lincoln could allow himself to be drawn into the adoption of so irrational a policy, we can hardly be surprised that missionaries, with no political experience, fell, nearly half a century earlier, into similar errors. The result of their doctrine was disastrous. It is usual to attribute the origin of Dutch antipathy in South Africa towards England to the emancipation of slaves, and to the inadequacy and mismanagement of the funds voluntarily devoted by Great Britain to compensate the slave-owners. It is true that these were factors in the creation of Dutch antipathy to the English, but deeper far than any resentment roused by pecuniary loss was the belief, for which we have chiefly to thank the missionaries, that the policy of the British Government was to place black and white upon an absolutely equal footing, political and social. Against such an attempt the Boers were prepared to make any sacrifices seventy years ago, and against such an attempt they are prepared to make any sacrifices today.

Fifty years ago intelligent Dutchmen held almost the

same language with regard to the natives which General Botha used in the abortive interview he had with Lord Kitchener in May, 1901.

In the Boer view the only way to govern the native was to keep him down in the place which God had assigned to him. On this point some Dutch witnesses before the Commission held in 1852-53 speak very clearly. At least five of the Commissioners were Boer farmers or Voertrekkers, and they were among the first to give their testimony. Said Mr. F. C. Scheepers: 'One reason which led to the emigration from the Cape Colony was that black and white were subject to the same laws. . . . I do not think that the same law will restrain the savage man which will restrain the white man. I think it would be just and good that, if a Kaffir refuses to work, the law should be that he is to leave the country. . . . I am of opinion that white and black cannot live together in peace in the same country unless the black man is in a state of subjection to the white. . . . In my mind, if a line were drawn dividing the country inhabited by whites, I would have all the blacks removed beyond that line, except those who would remain as servants to the whites.' Field-Commandant Maritz said: 'I think it would tend more to their advantage if the females were apprenticed as well as the males. From my experience of Kaffirs, there is no mode of dealing with them except that of compulsion or severity.' Mr. Caspar Labuschagne entirely concurred in the advice and opinions of his fellow-Commissioners. So also did Mr. Spies, who considered 'that everybody should be free to have as many Kaffirs as he was inclined to.' Mr. Pretorius was convinced that if the British Government 'was to give up the country to the Boers they would enjoy much more security than they had at present from the natives. He would make a law for the Kaffir, that every man having a Kaffir should be allowed to flog him when he misbehaved—of course in a moderate way. If this was known by the Kaffir, it would be almost unnecessary to inflict the punishment. In the time of the Volksraad this was the law, and then the Kaffir was in good order.' This statement he subsequently qualified by explaining that it was rather a rule than a law, and was merely the exercise of parental authority, like that of a father over his children. He also disclaimed any present recommendation that any such law should be passed, but the original suggestion no doubt indicated the actual trend of his mind. He added that the 'Kaffirs are much more insolent now than when first we came. This has considerably increased since the English took possession of the country. Thefts have become more common. The cause is the unbounded humanity of the English Government towards them.' Mr. Lotter very succinctly expressed his opinion that the apprenticing of Kaffirs of both sexes until they are of age 'will be of great use both to civilization and to their interests, and also that a separate law should be made for the Kaffir distinct from the white man, and very severe, as I know from experience in the old colony that mild laws are unsuited to them, and to the prejudice of both.'[1]

And we have the recorded notes of a Dutch lady, Mrs. Anna Elizabeth Steenkamp, who was the niece of the great Boer leader, Piet Retief, in which she states 'the reasons for

[1] 'A Lifetime in South Africa,' by Sir John Robinson, p. 295.

which we abandoned our lands and homesteads, our country and kindred.'

They were as follows:

1. The continual depredations and robberies of the Kaffirs, and their arrogant and overbearing conduct, and the fact that, in spite of the fine promises made to us by our Government, we nevertheless received no compensation for the property of which we were despoiled.

2. The shameful and unjust proceedings with reference to the freedom of our slaves; and yet it is not *so much their freedom that drove us to such lengths as their being placed on an equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinction of race and origin, so that it was intolerable for a decent Christian to bow down under such a yoke; wherefore we rather withdrew, in order thus to preserve our doctrines in purity.*[1]

Educated Dutchmen, such as Cloete, the author of 'The Great Trek,' who were fervent loyalists before the emancipation of the slaves in 1833, and were resigned loyalists after that date, could never conceal the repugnance with which they regarded the real or supposed objects of the Imperial policy in regard to the Native Question. It needs no argument to prove that though between the extreme views of the missionaries on the one hand, and of the Boers on the other, there was no possibility of conciliation, there was —as, indeed, there always is—a middle course for statesmen to pursue, which lay midway between the road marked out for them by negrophile and negrophobe respectively. It was quite possible, on the one hand, to have regarded the native as potentially a worthy member of civilized society without treating him as if he had actually achieved that status.

Unfortunately, at a critical moment a Minister was placed over the Colonial Office whose administration, it is no exaggeration to say, with the best intentions in the world, was like the fruit

> 'Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world and all our woe.'

When the political tide at last turned in England, which for thirty years had set so constantly in one direction that it

[1] The above extract is taken from an article by Mrs. Steenkamp, which appeared in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* for September, 1876. It is quoted (p. 46) in 'A Lifetime in South Africa,' by Sir John Robinson. The italics in the quotation are mine.

had come to be regarded as a fixed current, it was natural that Whig sentiments, so long suppressed, would find expression in an outburst of philanthropic Liberalism. The Reform movement in England might, if properly directed, have been turned to the profit of the Tory party. One of the most advanced Radicals of the day[1] expressed his opinion that if the Duke of Wellington had introduced a measure of electoral reform more moderate even than that which commended itself to Pitt at the beginning of the century, he would not only have averted the storm of popular passion which carried the drastic measure of 1832, but he would have confirmed his party in power for another indefinite period. The obstinacy, however, of the King, and the arrogant confidence of the Tories, born of an unusually prolonged spell of power, dammed up the modest stream of reforming energy till it became a flood which swept everything before it. It was only natural that the Whigs in their hour of triumph should have put in practice the principles which they had professed during their forty years' sojourn in the wilderness of Opposition. Chief amongst these was a chastened and qualified adoption of the revolutionary doctrines of the equality of men. It was equally natural that, entertaining these views, they should have accepted what may be called the missionary position with regard to the relations of the white men and natives in the colonies. It was not at all from any love of missionaries as such that their views were adopted by the Colonial Office. The missionaries represented the rights of man, and the colonists were regarded as cursed with a double dose of original Toryism. The first result of the triumph of the Whig party in England was the abolition of colonial slavery, which was effected at the cost of £20,000,000 paid in compensation to the slave-owners. This in itself was an estimable Act, but it had been passed upon grounds which were destined to produce the most disastrous consequences in South Africa. It is tolerably certain that the slave-owning class in the colony were resigned to the idea of the gradual extinction of slave-labour. What they were not prepared for was the recognition of anything like equality between the coloured races and

[1] Mr. Grant's 'Recollections of the House of Commons, 1834-35.'

themselves. This was made obvious in a variety of ways. Some three years before emancipation was effected, and while the Tories were still in office, an Order in Council was issued dealing with the treatment of slaves in the colonies. There was nothing in these provisions which ought reasonably to have alarmed the slave-owner except the recognition of the principle that the slave was something more than a mere chattel to be dealt with by the proprietor as he saw fit. For instance, the twenty-sixth clause required that a 'punishment Record Book' should be kept by each slave-proprietor, which should be submitted twice a year to the inspection of an official charged with the protection of the slaves. So violent was the opposition to this very moderate scheme for safeguarding the slave against brutal ill-treatment that the Governor, who was then Sir Charles Lowry, wrote to Lord Goderich, telling him that

> the excitement caused by the promulgation of the law, to many of the provisions of which obedience was impracticable, and which, though apparently recognising the right of property in slaves, virtually denied it by placing in the way of the slave-holders in the colony such obstacles to the management of their slaves as to render that species of property worse than usual. The slave-holders (he added) were unanimous in their determination to suffer the penalties of the law rather than comply with its provisions relative to the book directed to be kept for recording punishments.

And Dr. Theal, who regards this enactment as an 'acute torture inflicted upon the slave-holders,'[1] tells us[2] that—

> In Stellenbosch there was something like a riot. On April 11, 1831, a few slave-owners went to that village to submit their punishment record books to the Assistant Protector, whose office was in the public building, now the Theological Seminary. As soon as their object became known, a number of people assembled and began to hiss at them and pelt them with dirt. The Assistant Protector endeavoured to see Mr. Faure, the Resident Magistrate, whose office was in the same building, but he was refused admittance. The rioters broke the windows of the houses of the Assistant Protector and another person who was obnoxious to them, and kept control of the village until the expiration of the five days specified by law for the production of the punishment record books.

And further :[3]

> On September 17, 1832, about 2,000 slave-holders came together in Cape Town. Mr. Michiel Van Breda was elected chairman. The

[1] 'History of South Africa, 1795-1834,' p. 419.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 415. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 416.

utmost order was observed throughout the proceedings, though speeches were made and resolutions unanimously carried to the effect that many of the clauses of the Order in Council were not only unjust in principle, but inapplicable to the condition of the colony, and could not be carried out. The meeting resolved that if an elective legislative assembly were granted to the Cape, so that laws adapted to the country could be made, they would willingly co-operate, not only in the improvement of the condition of the slaves, but in the abolition of slavery itself.

The whole of the assembled slave-holders then marched from the Commercial Exchange up Grave Street, and halted in the open space in front of Government House. Mr. Michiel Van Breda and Advocate Henry Cloete were deputed to make known their resolutions and to confer with Sir Lowry Cole, who had previously consented to receive them. These gentlemen informed the Governor that the slave-holders were prepared to suffer the penalties of the law, but they could not obey it, and they entreated that the operation of the Order in Council, which they regarded as iniquitous, might be suspended. The Governor answered that it was beyond his power to comply with their wishes. A document was then drawn up and generally signed, in which the slave-holders declared that they could not obey the obnoxious provisions of the Order in Council, and protested against the disastrous consequences that must arise from an attempt to enforce them.

The attitude of enlightened and loyal Dutchmen towards what may be best described as the missionary policy in South Africa is best illustrated from the pages of so moderate a writer as the author of 'The Great Boer Trek.'

The inhabitants (he says[1]) saw with dread and apprehension how the Government gradually allowed the whole of that population (on which all farming pursuits on the frontier depended) to withdraw themselves from all control and agricultural pursuits, and to put themselves, moreover, under the spiritual charge of any person who, without reference to country or nation, announced himself as inclined to become the pastor of such flocks.

In this manner, within a few years no less than thirty missionary schools or institutions sprang up within the colony, where Dutchmen, Frenchmen, and Germans joined with English or Scotsmen nominally to instruct any Hottentots, or descendants of Hottentots, who felt inclined to congregate around them.

The younger ones, no doubt, received there the rudiments of some elementary education, but the older ones uniformly declared that they were 'too old' to learn, but yet preferred remaining there, leading a listless, idle life, so congenial to their habits, and could only be induced in the seasons of harvest or upon urgent applications occasionally to drive a waggon to market, and thus so far to 'lend their help,' but at such extravagant prices as at once deprived the agriculturist of his legitimate profits, and rendered such sources of labour so uncertain and precarious that in very many cases he was compelled to abandon agriculture altogether, and to depend solely upon his herds and flocks for food and support. But even for the protection and rearing of these some herdsmen and shepherds were needed, but these duties they also gradually ceased to perform, so that whenever a farmer was unable by the help of his own family to watch his flocks by day and by night, losses became fearful, and many in despair were compelled to give up all farming prospects, and to

take up their abode with some friends or relatives, so as to combine their resources, and thus eke out a miserable subsistence, without the chance of improving their condition, still less of providing for their offspring. . . . I have myself known farms which had been completely abandoned by the last remaining Hottentots having given up service or retired to the missionary schools, taking with them the flocks or herds which they had earned in their employer's service, and rejecting every offer or bribe to continue any longer in such service.

At the same time, however, Mr. Cloete bears unconscious testimony to the value of the work accomplished by missionaries amongst the natives:

It is a singular fact (he says) that the only relief which some of the farmers found in those districts (the northern and eastern) was at places adjoining the Bushman country, where a humane and enlightened policy soon received its never-failing reward.

Up to the beginning of this century[2] these Bushmen had been considered as utterly irreclaimable. The deadly poison which they dealt out to anyone approaching them in any suspicious attitude made them an object of universal dread and abhorrence. They were considered as the declared enemies of the human race, and I fear that the indiscriminate slaughter of men, women, and children of that race was at one time[3] considered not only as perfectly lawful, but praiseworthy.

However, about the beginning of this century, the worthy missionaries, the Rev. Messrs. Kicherer and Edwards,[4] boldly ventured among them, and, secure under the ægis of the Gospel and religion, they displayed their moral courage in the midst of the threats and the fearful scenes which they were compelled to witness, and their sublime sacrifice of every comfort, and almost of every necessity of life, in the cause of humanity, was ultimately rewarded by reclaiming at least some few clans, and establishing a friendly feeling between them and the nearest farmers.

The Act for the emancipation of slaves within the British colonies was passed by the Reformed Parliament in August, 1833, and in the year following, Sir Benjamin D'Urban was selected as the Governor to see that the provisions of the Act were faithfully carried out. It is important to bear this fact in mind, because Sir Benjamin, to whom Dr. Theal pays tribute of great respect, was the nominee of Lord Glenelg, and may therefore be presumed to have been in sympathy with the policy adopted by Lord Grey's administration. It is unnecessary for my purpose to enter into a discussion of the grievances, real enough, which the Dutch slave-owners sustained in the distribution of the allotted[5] compensation. It is unquestionable that the share of the £20,000,000

[1] 'The Great Boer Trek,' p. 37. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[3] That is, up to the time of the British occupation.
[4] Special objects of Dr. Theal's aversion.

devoted to the extinction of slavery which was available for that purpose in South Africa amounted only to half the sum at which the value of the slaves had been assessed by competent appraisers; and it is also true that the modes of paying such compensation as was allotted[1] were ridiculous and inconvenient, and were calculated to augment the losses caused by emancipation. But when all is said on that point that can be said, it must be borne in mind that the other British colonies suffered in equal or greater degree, and that the amount voted by the British taxpayer for the emancipation of slaves reached a sum which was about equal to half the national revenue at the time. And it should be further remembered that, when the slaves were emancipated in the United States at a much later period, not a penny of compensation of any sort was paid. I do not dwell upon this particular cause of discontent, because I agree with the Dutch apologists that the abolition of slavery and the inadequate compensation paid did not supply the most potent motive for the Great Trek. The crowning grievance of all, that which touched the lymphatic Boer in his tenderest point, was the avowed intention of Lord Glenelg to place black and white on the same footing so far as Imperial policy was concerned. Sir Benjamin D'Urban, 'without compare' (writes Cloete in 1852) 'the best Governor with which the Cape Colony has ever been favoured,' was, as I have just pointed out, Lord Glenelg's nominee. He endeavoured at the outset, with perfect loyalty to his chief, and in accordance with his own convictions, to carry out what I have described as the missionary policy. Everything that could be done to conciliate the natives was done under Sir Benjamin's direct supervision. The result, however, was that which has accompanied every exhibition of excessive conciliation in South Africa. The natives, long used to oppression by the Dutch, had learnt from experience[2] that cessation of hostilities towards them only meant that the aggressor felt himself too weak to take the initiative. It was not unnatural that he should have interpreted the new policy pursued by the English Government as an indication of

[1] It was paid in drafts on London.
[2] That is, up to the time of the British occupation.

similar weakness. Without provocation the Kaffirs, to the number of 15,000 men, rose on Christmas Day, 1834, and raided the whole frontier, burning and destroying every farmhouse, murdering the inhabitants, and carrying away all their cattle and property. The sequel I had better give in Mr. Cloete's own words:

The losses (he said[1]) had been inquired into with the greatest care and minuteness, and the official returns showed that those sustained on the immediate frontier amounted to:

456 farmhouses burnt and totally destroyed;
350 others partially pillaged and gutted;
60 waggons captured by the Kaffirs and destroyed;
5,715 horses, 111,930 head of horned cattle, and 161,930 sheep taken and irrecoverably lost—
amounting in value to upwards of £300,000, independent of the losses by persons who contributed to the outfitting of the various 'commandos' from each district.

A few thousand recaptured cattle were, however, all the trophies of the war, and the feelings of the inhabitants may easily be guessed at when amongst these many breeding cattle and entire spans of oxen were recognised by their former owners, but who, upon reclaiming them, were told that they could not be surrendered, as they were to be publicly sold in order to compensate for part of the expenses of war, but that they were hereafter to get ample compensation. But what were their feelings, and those of their gallant commander, when, after having suffered these losses and encountered the dangers of a most harassing war of fifteen months' duration, a despatch was received from the then Secretary of the Colonies, Lord Glenelg, dated December 26, 1835[2] (which had been immediately

[1] 'The Great Boer Trek,' p. 82 *et seq.*

[2] Of the famous despatch of Lord Glenelg, Mr. Lucas, as befits the official historian of South Africa from the point of view of the Colonial Office, writing with judicial coldness, says ('History of South Africa to the Jameson Raid,' p. 162): 'Few decisions have had more far-reaching results than that which was embodied in Lord Glenelg's despatch. It would be foolish and unjust not to credit the author of the despatch with courage and high principle, but it is impossible on the other hand to acquit him of wrong-headed obstinacy. In many ways, direct and indirect, the course of action which he prescribed worked mischief, not least in the precedent which it furnished for after-times. It was the beginning of undoing in South Africa. It may well be questioned whether greater misery has not been caused in the world by going back than by going forward, especially where native races are concerned. And it is certain that men are more easily persuaded to move forward if the impression gains ground that their steps can be lightly retraced. The Romans of old, as long as their political system was healthy and sound, rarely went back; and among all the nations of the world, few if any have stood higher as rulers. Men ask to be sure of those with whom they are to deal, to be confident that what has been done to-day will be upheld to-morrow. A lower race forgives much to a higher race if it is strong, consistent and unswerving; but when the white man perpetually shifts his course, blown about by every wind of doctrine, then for a generation and more nothing is forgiven and nothing is forgotten. "What can be more detestable than to be perpetually changing our minds? We forget that a State in which the laws, though imperfect, are unalterable is better off than one in which the laws are good but powerless." So said, and said truly, an Athenian orator, and he began his

published by the home authorities through the blue-book), containing the most unreserved condemnation of the whole policy and operations of the war, abusing in unmeasured language the barbarous manner in which (the Secretary of State asserted) the war had been conducted, and concluding with the following extraordinary declaration (as emanating from His Majesty's Government) touching the justice of the war, viz. :

> 'Through a long series of years the Kaffirs had an ample justification of war. They had to resent, and endeavoured justly, though impotently, to avenge a series of encroachments. They had a perfect right to hazard the experiment, however hopelessly, of extorting by force that redress which they could not otherwise obtain, and that the original justice is on the side of the conquered (the Kaffirs), and not of the victorious party !'

A communication more cruel, unjust, and insulting to the feelings not only of the commander, who, wholly intent upon the most pacific and conciliatory measures with the Kaffirs, had been suddenly attacked, and seen the country placed under his authority and protection invaded, but of the inhabitants, who had not only been engaged in a twelve months' warfare of the most harassing and dangerous character, but who were smarting from a system pursued during *fourteen* years by the local Government never affording them redress for their most serious losses and grievances on this subject, can hardly have been penned by a declared enemy of the country and its Governor, and it at once opened the eyes of the colonists to what they had long suspected, viz., that in the estimation of his then Majesty's Government they were marked as the aggressors in the war and the oppressors of the Kaffir race; that the latter, and not they, were entitled to sympathy and relief. And that they were not wrong in these conclusions soon became still more apparent upon their being informed that all their applications for indemnity for the losses they had sustained were rejected, that all the grants of land about to be made to persons, even within the country ceded to the Government ever since the year 1817, were to be revoked and cancelled, and that the Kaffirs were to be fully reinstated in the possession of all the lands which by the terms of the treaty of September, 1835, they had formally ceded to His Majesty, his heirs and successors for ever; and, moreover, when they heard that a Lieutenant-Governor[1] had been appointed whose opinions (as publicly expressed in his examination before a Committee of the House of Commons on the line of policy to be observed towards the Kaffirs) seemed at least to hold out the prospect that these views of His Majesty's Government would be carried out to the letter.

To expect that an entire population thus insulted and injured should still continue loyally and well-affected towards the Government was as impossible as to expect 'that of thorns men should gather figs, or that of a bramble-bush they should gather grapes.'

From that moment, then, the farmers throughout the eastern province saw that the whole Hottentot race, who had been their former prædial servants, had been withdrawn from them, and were fast assuming a certain 'nationality' within the colony. They had had the few slaves they possessed taken from them at a ridiculous compensation, which several had refused to accept, and they now, lastly, found their houses and farms burnt and destroyed, their stocks and herds taken from them,

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speech with the reflection: "I have remarked again and again that a democracy cannot manage an empire."'

[1] Sir Andries Stockenstrom.

without a chance of redress or indemnity, and, from the policy at once laid down by the home Government, they further clearly saw that their lives and future properties would for ever be endangered, and that even the day of their again recovering their former wealth would as certainly be marked by another irruption and the sweeping away of their newly-acquired herds, as effects must follow causes.

From that moment, therefore, it may be said that the determination to quit the land of their fathers became general and universal, and the leading families in the Oliphant's Hoek, Gamtoos River, along the Fish River and Somerset, forming themselves into little knots, at once prepared for this 'Exodus,' although there were, no doubt, some persons or families who joined this emigration who had also some private or personal cause for thus expatriating, as, for instance, the Greylings, for having been indicted and severely mulcted at the Circuit Court at Uitenhage for contravening the ordinance for the abolition of slavery; W. S. van der Merwe, for having a personal quarrel with the Civil Commissioner of his district; the late unfortunate Retief, for having been insulted (as he conceived) by the Lieutenant-Governor of the eastern province; and Piet Uys, on account of his wife having been committed in his absence, by virtue of a warrant of a local magistrate, and taken before him in custody as a prisoner. Yet these were but 'drops' in the ocean of emigration, an ocean which from that moment began irresistibly to flow into the interior of Africa, and from thence into Natal.

Such was the result of the attempt of a doctrinaire philanthropist to carry out to its logical conclusion the theory of the rights of man. The point of view of Radical sentimentalism was that from which our policy was directed for a considerable number of years. It was an impossible point of view to have been taken by anyone familiar with the circumstances of South Africa, or, indeed, of any colony of any nation which comprised a large native and barbarous population. The worst feature of it was not that it failed, as it could not avoid failing, to effect the object for which it was adopted, but that it alienated for ever the Dutch race living under our rule; and it may be confidently asserted that the receipt of Lord Glenelg's childishly impertinent despatch begot the resolution, which was never effaced from Dutch hearts, to establish a Republic in South Africa which should be independent if possible, but, if dependent, not dependent upon Great Britain.

Nothing could better illustrate this than the strange adventures of Mr. Smellekamp, supercargo on a Dutch vessel called the *Brazilia*, which happened to be lying in Port Natal, as Durban was originally called, at the time when the emigrant farmers who had established themselves in Natal had set up a Republic of their own. Mr. Smellekamp was

either an impostor or possessed of more than a due share of Batavian humour. He posed as a plenipotentiary of Holland, and represented to the Boers the King of the Netherlands as one of the greatest and most influential potentates of Europe. He fills a rather disproportionate space in the annals of South African history, but no one will grudge him the honour, since, as an adventurer, he was an entertaining scoundrel. Mr. Cloete, who had to deal with him, tells us[1] that

Mr. Smellekamp, who afterwards resided in the Orange Free State (as it is now called), informed the emigrant farmers upon his first arrival that a number of merchants in Holland had taken a deep interest in their affairs, and had despatched this vessel (the *Brazilia*) for the express purpose of opening a direct trade with their country and supplying them with 'notions' of Dutch produce and manufacture. This arrival, and the display of the Dutch flag, aroused in all the emigrant farmers the most extravagant affection for the country and people to which most of them traced their descent. Mr. Smellekamp was received at this place with triumphal honours; public dinners were given him; the Dutch flag became the ensign of the new republic; and Mr. Smellekamp, led away by the enthusiasm with which his arrival had been greeted, gave the inhabitants of Natal the most exaggerated ideas of the power and influence of Holland in the council of nations; moreover, assuring them of the sympathy and support of the King of Holland, and finally entered into a formal treaty with the Volksraad, assuring them of the 'protection' of Holland, to which he affixed his signature in these terms: 'Accepted in the name of the King of the Netherlands, subject to His Majesty's formal approval.' He further gave them the strongest assurances that they would soon be provided with ministers and schoolmasters for the improvement of their moral condition, and with arms and ammunition to repel any hostile attack with which they might be threatened.

I cannot give a more striking illustration of the manner in which the Volksraad were misled on that occasion, as to the support they expected from the King of Holland, than by relating the following anecdote: Some days after my arrival here in June, 1843, I had an interview with several leading members of the Volksraad, in the course of which I happened to allude to some political measures going on in Europe, and to state that such a measure was under the consideration of the *five* great Powers. Whereupon I was at once asked by the spokesman which were these five *great* Powers to which I had alluded. I replied that those Powers were England, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The querist at once exclaimed: 'And is Holland not one of them?' This compelled me to enter at some length into the modern history of Europe, and to explain to them how Holland had since the year 1830, by the rebellion and subsequent formation of Belgium into a separate kingdom, dwindled into a *third*-rate Power of Europe, when the spokesman significantly and bitterly replied: '*We were never told that before, but the very reverse.*'

The emigrant farmers were, however, so fully convinced at the time that they had now obtained the countenance of a first-rate European Power in support of their independence, that Mr. Smellekamp had all his travelling expenses paid to enable him to return to Holland direct (as the

[1] 'The Great Boer Trek,' p. 145.

Brazilia was destined for a lengthened cruise to the eastward); and he was, moreover, made the bearer of a number of official and other letters to the Ministers of State of His Majesty the King of Holland and to many influential persons in that country, claiming the interposition of those persons in support of the independence of Natal.

Fortunately, the point of view represented by Lord Glenelg's policy, fatal as in some respects its consequences were, was not long in the ascendant. The Ministry to which he belonged was swept away by the great Conservative reaction which brought Sir Robert Peel into power at the close of the year 1841. For a brief period a reasonable point of view was taken by Her Majesty's Government. Lord Stanley's[1] despatch of December 13, 1842, contrasts most favourably with that which, seven years earlier, had produced the Great Trek and all the potential consequences which have since been developed. Lord Stanley had to deal with the state of affairs as he found it. The emigrants had gone, with a hatred for England and all things English, and they had been baffled in their attempt to set up an independent Republic in Natal. The despatch in question, which Mr. Henry Cloete took with him when acting as Commissioner to effect a settlement in Natal, ran in part as follows:[2]

The question then remains, in what manner to deal with the district and the numerous population thus brought again into submission, and under allegiance to Her Majesty.

Various courses may be pursued, the supremacy of the British Crown having been established; the existing population might be permitted to remain and conduct their own affairs, withdrawing the British troops, and thus neither exercising practical control over them, nor affording them efficient protection.[3]

They may be removed and compelled to return under the pressure of an overwhelming military force, such as would leave no alternative but those of submission or extermination.

The emigrants may be summoned to return within the settled limits of the colony of the Cape, deprived of all protection, in the event of their refusal, against the hostility of the Zoolahs [*sic*] and other tribes, and of the Kafirs within their own boundaries, and further, if deemed expedient, cut off from all supplies by sea, and all regular and uninterrupted communication by land; or, lastly, they may be taken under the protection of the British Crown, their district recognised and adopted as a British colony, and such institutions established, under British authority, as Her Majesty may think fit.

[1] Afterwards the great Lord Derby.

[2] 'History of the Great Boer Trek,' p. 184.

[3] I have adopted Cloete's punctuation, but the sense seems to require that the semicolon should be placed after the word 'pursued,' and a comma substituted for the semicolon after the word 'established.'

All these courses are open to adoption, and all require thus to be maturely and carefully weighed.

Two other courses, indeed, there are, to neither of which, however, could Her Majesty's servants for a moment listen; the one, to admit the independence of the emigrants, and to disclaim all responsibility respecting them; the other, to permit them to come under the protection or dominion of any foreign Power.

1. The first course of the four to which I have adverted is open to very obvious objections. Virtually, though not nominally, it would be conferring independence on the emigrants, and the British Government would, in the face of the civilized world, make itself responsible for the conduct of its subjects, whom, nevertheless, it neither assumed to control by legislation, nor to protect by military support. I fear, moreover, that in the present state of the population, many of their acts, whether towards each other, towards the native tribes within their limits, or towards those who surround them, might be such as the British Government could neither approve nor permit; that disunion and jealousies among themselves would require the intervention of some supreme authority, and that Her Majesty could not safely entrust the emigrant farmers with the unchecked management of the Kafirs within their territory, nor repose entire confidence in the moderation and temper with which they might repel the aggressions or avenge the occasional depredations of the border tribes.

2. I confess, if there were any reasonable probability of inducing the body of the emigrants to return within the settled limits of the colony, under your government, either voluntarily or after a reasonable time, by such methods of compulsion as I have already indicated, such would be the result, which, as you are already aware, Her Majesty's Government would most willingly see accomplished.

But you[1] and Col. Cloete concur in representing, in the strongest terms, the impossibility of inducing any considerable numbers of these emigrants voluntarily to return to the colony for the sake of British protection; and in your despatches of the 25th of July and the 24th of August, you assign very strong reasons why, on this subject, no intermediate mode of compulsion should be adopted.

Her Majesty's Government have carefully weighed the arguments which you have urged and the difficulties which you have suggested in opposition to such a measure, and I am bound to acknowledge that they appear to us to be almost, if not entirely, conclusive.

But it appears to us that there are reasons at least equally strong against the third course suggested, that of the employment against the Boers of a force sufficient to compel their return, or to exterminate them.

That such a course is within our power, there can be no doubt; but notwithstanding all the faults of which the emigrants have been guilty, I cannot be insensible to their good qualities, nor to the past hardships which they have undergone; nor can I reconcile it to my sense, either of humanity or policy, to employ a large British force in the extirpation of a body of industrious colonists, professing allegiance to the British crown, and inviting the savage tribes surrounding them to join in the exterminating process. Measures so extreme could be justified only by a necessity which I am happy to think does not in this case exist.

There remains then only to be considered the question of the recog-

[1] Sir George Napier, who had succeeded Sir Benjamin D'Urban on his dismissal, as Governor of Cape Colony.

nition of the territory of Port Natal as a British colony, or part of a British colony. . . .

The Commissioner will be authorised to call together the principal emigrant farmers and others, and inform them that Her Majesty having been graciously pleased to bury in oblivion past transactions, and desirous of being enabled to rely upon their present assurances of dutiful obedience and loyalty, is anxious to place the institutions of the colony upon such a footing, consistent with the maintenance of her royal authority, as may be most acceptable to the bulk of her subjects. The Commissioner is therefore to be authorised to invite the unreserved expression of their opinions and wishes, in respect to the judicial and other local institutions, under which they may desire to be placed, with an assurance that such expressions, when submitted to Her Majesty, shall receive Her Majesty's most favourable consideration.

He will cause it to be distinctly understood, however, that this authority does not extend to the question of legislation; on which Her Majesty reserves to herself the most entire freedom of action.

I think it probable, looking to the nature of the population, that they will desire those institutions to be founded on the Dutch, rather than on the English, model, and however little some of those institutions may be suited to a more advanced state of civilization, it is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that in this respect the contentment of the emigrants rather than the abstract merits of the institutions should guide our decision.

These liberal terms were accepted by the majority of the emigrant farmers who were settled in Natal. There was an irreconcilable minority styling themselves ultra-Radicals[1] who would not accept the conditions which satisfied men like Maritz, Potgieter, M. J. Pretorius, Martin Prinsloo, J. A. Cilliers, and others, and it is well to remember that the obstacle to their acceptance of the terms was the following conditions stated in the proclamation to be equally essential:

1. That there shall not be in the eye of the law any distinction or disqualification whatever founded on mere distinction of colour, origin, language, or creed, but that the protection of the law in letter and in substance shall be extended impartially to all alike.

2. That no aggression shall be sanctioned upon the natives residing beyond the limits of the colony under any pretence whatever by any private person or any body of men, unless acting under the immediate authority and orders of Government.

3. That slavery in any shape or under any modification is absolutely unlawful, as in any other portion of Her Majesty's dominions.

Unfortunately, the reign of rational principles at the Colonial Office was soon to be cut short, and a new epoch with a new point of view was ushered in. In 1845 the

[1] Their title was only justifiable on the principle that too far east is west, for their Radicalism was the expression of the most reactionary Toryism.

agitation for the abolition of the Corn Laws culminated in the conversion of Sir Robert Peel, in the retirement of Lord Stanley from the Colonial Office, which was still bound in unnatural wedlock to the War Office, and in the reduction of the great Conservative party which Peel had laboriously built up to a state of impotence from which it required nearly thirty years to recover. From this date, for nearly a quarter of a century, the value, needs, and opinions of the British colonists in all parts of the world were to be regarded from the standpoint of the triumphant Manchester School.

The victory achieved by the Manchester School in 1846 was a unique incident in British Parliamentary history. The repeal of the Corn Laws was effected by a Minister, himself a Protectionist, who led a great and only lately resuscitated party which at the preceding elections in 1841 had swept the country mainly upon this very issue. It was, perhaps, the first occasion upon which a measure reversing the whole fiscal policy of the country became law without having been first submitted to the electors. Apart altogether from the question of the tactics by which the triumph of the Manchester School was achieved, there can be no doubt that the creed of the Cobdenites, as they came to be called, was based upon assumptions, some of which have been demonstrated to be false, and others of which came near to dissolving the British Empire, and led in the case of South Africa to the adoption of still another point of view which was almost as ruinous as its immediate predecessor. It is perhaps hardly necessary for me to disclaim any desire to discuss, and still less to attack, the policy of Free Trade as a policy. That would be altogether foreign to my purpose, and, indeed, is a problem which cannot be dealt with on general principles. Time, place, circumstances, traditions, and a variety of other considerations, have to be taken into account by statesmen of every country before they arrive at a conclusion as to the respective benefits of Free Trade and Protection. The assumption, however, upon which Cobdenites depended are matters of a different nature. They affected not only the fiscal policy of the country, but also its foreign and colonial policy.

In the years which witnessed the downfall of Protection, statesmen looked at all questions solely from the point of view of the political economist, and to this disregard of their proper functions is due the false assumptions upon which the policy of absolute Free Trade was justified to the country. The first of these assumptions was that the human race did or would or should look upon itself merely as a wealth-producing machine, and should ignore all those distinctions of race, religion, language, and traditions, which are as potent factors in the problem of human progress as the desire for wealth. It ignored, too, all those powerful considerations which determine a man's choice of an urban or rural life. It assumed that as soon as mankind realized that compliance with certain clearly-defined natural laws would enormously increase the wealth (which they identified with the happiness) of humanity, rulers and people would model their policy entirely upon the doctrines of this newly-acquired knowledge. Wars would cease throughout the world because war demonstrably destroyed wealth; and those who were employed in military pursuits were unproductive labourers in a garden of poisonous weeds. They anticipated the advent of the millennium, and pictured to themselves a world in which there would be no rivalry but that of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest. It was, as was truly said at the time, a bagman's millennium, and experience has shown that it never had, and never will have, the faintest prospect of realization. The half-century that followed the repeal of the Corn Laws in England witnessed not only the bloodiest and most desperate wars recorded in history, but it has also seen every nation in the world except our own stiffening its fiscal policy in the interests of Protection rather than of universal Free Trade.

The delusions of the Cobdenites as to the political consequences of the realization of their fiscal dream were flattered for the few years which culminated in the first great International Exhibition in 1851. It was thought that the aggregation of representatives of all classes from all nations which flocked to do homage to the trophies of industry accumulated in Paxton's Crystal Palace would not only open the eyes of a purblind world to the blessings of Free Trade,

but would unite them in a universal brotherhood that would look back upon the epochs of war and slaughter as horrible and almost inconceivable nightmares. Between the opening of the Crystal Palace and the firing of the first shot in the most insensate war ever waged, there was an interval of only thirty months; and from the close of the Crimean War to the end of the nineteenth century hardly a decade has passed in which man was not slaying his fellow-man in legitimate warfare in one or other of the hemispheres. If military warfare has known no pause since the triumph of the Manchester School, still less can it be said that we have enjoyed the blessing of commercial peace. With the exception of Great Britain, every civilized Power has been engaged in a constant conflict in which the weapons were hostile and prohibitive tariffs. The political consequences of the adoption of Free Trade, so far as England and her dependencies were concerned, have been quite different from those which Cobden and his friends anticipated. It is quite true that the principal author of Sir Robert Peel's fiscal policy admitted that the struggle was one between town and country. At the same time, he denied that the repeal of the Corn Laws could ever so adversely influence the price of wheat as to injure, and much less to jeopardize, the agricultural interests of Great Britain. Yet one of the greatest social problems of the day is a lineal descendant of the memorable victory of which the Free Trade Hall at Manchester is the material monument. Agriculture in this country has languished, and the end of its languishment is not yet. The children of the soil, to use the old-world expression, have been driven in search of employment into the great industrial centres, where, herded and huddled together in towns, they have brought about a social and sanitary situation with which the old machinery of Government has been unable to cope. Of course it is said, and said with truth, that increased facilities of transport, and the consequent diminution of the cost of freight, would in any case have exercised a depressing influence upon what but a century ago was the stable industry of the country. And it is equally true that in no circumstances could the growing population of the United Kingdom have been fed upon the products of the soil of these islands. A commercial

and industrial revolution was bound to come, but had it not been for the sudden shock given by the decisive victory of the Free Traders, the change would have been effected gradually after the manner of most Anglo-Saxon revolutions. As it was, the commercial system of the country was dislocated, while the machinery of Government was that adapted to the needs of a generation which knew not Cobden.

Important as were the results of the delusions upon which the Cobdenites had nursed themselves, as affecting their policy in other directions, it was in its bearing upon the relations of the mother-country and her colonies that the worst effects were produced. Looking backward, and granting the assumptions of the Cobdenites, it is easy to understand the otherwise unintelligible attitude they adopted towards the colonies. If the habitable globe was in future to be tenanted by a peaceful race, intent only on buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, it could not matter much to anyone what might be the colour of the yard or two of bunting which waved over any particular centre. If mankind was to be divided into producers and consumers, or into classes composed of those who both produced and consumed, it really mattered little or nothing whether the Anglo-Saxon settled in Australia called himself an Englishman, or an Australian, or a Frenchman, or a German. Some people, it was admitted, might be so devoured by old-world superstitions as to prefer to buy from their countrymen rather than from those whom, in the arrogance of a martial age, they styled 'foreigners.' They were, however, too few in number to count. It was taken for granted that the producers and consumers in distant lands would take no more stock of the nationalities of their customers or patrons than the man or woman shopping in Regent Street is deterred from or attracted into entering a shop by the name which is over the door. Arguing thus, the Cobdenites, in the haughty consciousness of British commercial supremacy, persuaded themselves that Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans, whether they were regarded as poor relations or were disowned by the mother-country, must deal almost exclusively with John Bull. This indifference to ties of blood and sentiment

was heightened into something like positive antipathy when the thrifty Cobdenites realized the size of the bill which we were called upon every year to pay for the maintenance of a useless and ostentatious Empire. When they decided upon conferring on the colonies an autonomy hardly distinguishable from absolute independence, they openly avowed that they were deliberately taking the first step towards a final separation between Great Britain and her dependencies. Nothing weighed with these fanatical economists which could not be duly registered in a ledger, and set forth as an available asset, when the accountant presented his annual balance-sheet. Just as to a man absorbed in science, such as Isaac Newton, poetry seemed no more than 'ingenious nonsense,' so to the Free Traders of the nineteenth century pride in Empire, kinship, and national affinities, appeared to be the superstition of an effete aristocracy, which had no more meaning or material value than its armorial bearings.

Fortunately, what is known as sentiment does not dry up as quickly in a young sapling as in an old tree. This sentiment which the Cobdenites derided and endeavoured to destroy declined to be extinguished in the young settlements beyond the seas. Aspersed, despised, and almost spurned from our doors, the colonists clung with pathetic fidelity to their affection for the old country, which treated them more like the step-mother of romance than the mother of actual life. It was South Africa which suffered most from this unnatural alienation. To all appearances a barren and unproductive country, it had little to sell, and consequently was a bad customer. So insignificant was its trade, that those who assessed everything by the entries in the ledger contemptuously informed their poor relation from the South that their custom was not worth having. Beyond and above this was the still more damning fact that on the debit side of the ledger the cost of defending the country against Kaffirs loomed as large as the modest items of trading profit shrank into insignificance on the other side.

And so we find that throughout the epoch of Manchester School ascendancy statesmen of all parties were anxious to rid themselves of their South African incubus.

For one brief period in the forties there seemed a prospect

of settling the South African Question on a permanent basis. Sir Harry Smith[1] defeated at the Battle of Boomplatz[2] a half-hearted rebellion in what was then the Orange Sovereignty. A Constitution was granted in 1849 which, though not very liberal in the political sense of the term, was so well adapted to the needs of the colony that settlers flocked in from the Cape Colony, immigration from Europe steadily increased, and 'flourishing villages suddenly sprang up, and the apparently waste lands of a year or two previous became studded with substantial homesteads.'[3] But the reaction was soon to come. The doctrine of *laissez faire*, which meant *laissez aller*, was expressly adopted by Lord Grey, who during this critical period was Secretary of State for the Colonies.

He had assented to the establishment of the Orange River sovereignty on condition that the management of their own concerns, with the duty of providing for their own defence and for the payment of the expense of that system of government which is established among them, should be thrown entirely on the emigrant Boers and on the native tribes amongst whom they are settled. . . . Writing in September, 1851, he blamed the British resident at Bloemfontein for interfering too much in the government of the territory. To govern it permanently by military power he considered to be out of the question. If the majority of the inhabitants will not support the authority of the resident, he must be withdrawn. The relinquishment of the territory would be a necessity to be greatly lamented, but it must rest with the Boers and with the native chiefs to decide whether or not such a step should be taken. The words were those of a strong advocate of colonial self-government and colonial self-defence a policy which was being carried out in other parts of the British Empire. *It was, and is, a great policy, but the spirit which first inspired it was not so much the love of freedom and the desire to confer independence as a passionate longing to set a bound to the responsibilities of the mother-country, and to save her expense.* . . . Where the inhabitants of a territory are nearly all of one white race, especially if it is the Anglo-Saxon race, the problem of self-government is easily solved. Where, as was the case beyond the Orange River, white men and black are intermixed, and the white men are not all of one blood or of one way of thinking, there is a danger that self-governing institutions may be perverted into tyranny or degenerate into anarchy. If given in such cases, self-government, one would think, should be gradually given, for more often than not men who have fought to be free need to be trained to rule.[4]

The policy of the Home Government was directed to the ultimate emancipation of Great Britain from all responsi-

[1] For all this period see the excellent 'Life of Sir Henry Smith,' published as the book was passing through the press.

[2] August 29, 1848.

[3] Blue-book, May, 1853, p. 53.

[4] The italics in the above passage, taken from Lucas's 'History of South Africa,' pp. 214-216, are my own.

bility in the defence of her colonies. The method of the Manchester School was to rid the country immediately of such accessions as did not entail obligations upon us to protect them, and to build up a system of local self-government in the others, in the hope and expectation that when they had reached their full development these colonies would voluntarily detach themselves from the mother-country. Granted the assumptions of these economists turned politicians, it is quite easy to understand their motives, and even to appreciate the steps they took towards the dissolution of the British Empire. Modern wars, they alleged, arose from the anxiety of the respective Powers to grab as much territory as they could in order to secure for their own manufacturers a monopoly of trade within their dominions. Under a system of universal Free Trade there would be no incentive whatever to the gratification of this greedy and grasping spirit. They made a kind of mental reservation with regard to individual races, which could not be expected in their state of political infancy to understand the truths of the gospel of Free Trade. They were therefore not averse to extending a benevolent surveillance over the nigger until such time as he had learned the necessity of wearing clothes and buying hardware goods in the cheapest markets. Had the assumptions of the Manchester School been justified by experience, the results they anticipated would have followed as inevitably as daylight follows the rising of the sun. Unfortunately, mankind has moved in a direction directly opposite to that in which Mr. Cobden and his school imagined it would walk. Everywhere, except in Great Britain, the severity of what may be called the fiscal game laws has been steadily increased. The area of open markets has as steadily diminished. Keepers in the form of hostile tariffs have been doubled at the old gateways, and additional policemen have been posted wherever a new inlet has been discovered.

Even a greater disillusionment than this was in store for the Cobdenites. If in moments of reflection and heart-searching they were ever tempted to doubt the capacity of foreigners for realizing the blessings of the 'bagman's millennium,' it never occurred to them that men of British stock beyond the seas would have turned their backs upon the

great light which was diffused from Manchester. And therefore, in advocating the grant of self-government to the colonies, they refused to make any provision for the regulation of commercial relations between the colonies and the mother-country. It was not ignorance nor forgetfulness which prompted this omission; it was utter incapacity to believe that Englishmen, wherever they were settled, could refuse to accept doctrines so palpably inspired as those of Free Trade. The opposition to the repeal of the Corn Laws came from the great agricultural interests, the champions of which were regarded by the Free Traders as Bœotians living in utter selfishness and outer darkness. If the land-owners and farmers of Great Britain were to be ruined by the admission of cheap wheat, it was the settlers in our great pastoral and agricultural colonies who would profit by their bankruptcy. If Australian or Canadian corn could be imported into England so cheaply as to diminish the cost of living and keep down wages, on the other hand the adoption of Free Trade principles would enable the Canadian and Australian to buy his ploughshare and his reaping-hook at infinitely reduced prices, which would permit of his selling his wheat still more cheaply. Englishmen beyond the seas wanted exactly the goods with which we could best and most inexpensively supply them, and they could produce with equal facility exactly the commodities—food-stuffs and raw materials—of which we stood most in need. What, then, was simpler than that the manufacturer who had something to sell should make free exchange with the man who wanted to buy and had something of equivalent value to offer in return? On paper nothing could be more conclusive; in practice nothing was more impossible. For reasons into which there is no need to enter now, colonists followed the rest of the world—followed the example of the benighted foreigner instead of the teachings of the men of light and leading who hailed from Manchester. This disappointment of the confident hopes entertained by the Manchester School prepared the way for the advent of that rational Imperialism the growth of which was the most marked feature of the last thirty years of the nineteenth century.

During the period, however, which we are discussing,

Cobdenite principles were in the ascendant. At the close of 1847 Sir Harry Smith had been sent out as High Commissioner of South Africa to carry out a new policy—namely, that of retaining under British control all districts which, by the Congress of Vienna, were recognised as within our 'sphere of influence,' and which had been, or might be, brought within the scope of European influence. By the end, however, of 1851 the leaven of Cobdenism had worked, and Lord Grey, who was Secretary of State for the Colonies, wrote to Sir Harry Smith that

> The ultimate abandonment of the Orange River territory must be a settled point of our policy. You will distinctly understand that any war, however sanguinary, which may afterwards occur between different tribes or communities which will be left in a state of independence beyond the colonial bounds, are to be considered as affording no ground for your interference.

It was an impossible order, and one which Sir Bartle Frere declares to have been the cause of all our trouble in South Africa. Sir Harry Smith, like most of the Governors before and after him who realized the actualities of the problem and related them to his superior, was immediately recalled.

In 1852 the Sand River Convention was signed, which carried out the prevailing ideas. The first clause of the Convention ran:

> The Assistant-Commissioner guarantees to the foreign settlers, and the British Government to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal River, the right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves according to their own laws without any interference on the part of the British Government, and that no encroachment shall be made by the said Government on the territory upon the north of the Vaal River, with the further assurance that the warmest wish of the British Government is to promote peace, Free Trade, and friendly intercourse with the emigrant farmers now inhabiting, or who hereafter may inhabit, that country; it being understood that this system of non-interference is binding upon both parties.

It may be remarked in passing that the clause, as quoted by the Boers and their sympathizers in Great Britain, ends at the semicolon. Among the other clauses were the following:

> Her Majesty's Assistant-Commissioner hereby disclaims all alliances whatever or with whomsoever of the coloured nations to the north of the Vaal River.
>
> It is agreed that no slavery is, or should, be permitted or prac-

tised in the country to the north of the Vaal River by the emigrant farmers.

And then we trace the finger of Manchester:

Mutual facilities and liabilities should be afforded to traders and travellers on both sides of the Vaal River.

It was natural that this initial step in the policy of scuttling should be followed by the renunciation of the Orange River sovereignty. At that time there can be no doubt that a large majority of the burghers of what was subsequently the Orange Free State were vehemently opposed to their abandonment by the British Government, especially in view of the threatening attitude of the Basutos on their border; but as we were even then drifting into the Crimean War, and Sir George Cathcart had informed the Home Government that at least 2,000 men would be required to hold the sovereignty, the teachings of Manchester were strengthened by prudential considerations. In January, 1854, a royal proclamation was issued, 'abandoning and renouncing all dominion and sovereignty over the Orange River Territory.' When a deputation awaited upon the Duke of Newcastle, who succeeded Lord Grey at the Colonial Office, to relate to him the despair with which loyalists viewed their abandonment by Great Britain, he told them bluntly that the Queen's authority had already been too far extended in South Africa; that it was necessary for England to supply troops to defend constantly advancing outposts,

especially as Cape Town and the Port of Table Bay was all she really required in South Africa.

It was not, however, very long before the burghers north of the Orange River marked their emancipation from English control by indulging in internecine strife. Mr. Kruger first sprang into notoriety by the part he played in the raid organized at Potchefstroom by Mr. M. W. Pretorius and the Orange Free State. This little family quarrel was ultimately arranged, and the four rival Republics north of the Vaal amalgamated. An attempt was made to federate the Orange Free State with the Transvaal, and, with the object of forwarding it, Mr. Pretorius resigned the presidency of the

Transvaal and accepted that of the Orange Free State; but the burghers of the two States declined to coalesce, and in 1864 Mr. Pretorius returned to the Transvaal to reconcile these factions which had again broken out, and became once more the President of the South African Republic. It may perhaps be as well to record that one of the first measures adopted by the Transvaalers after the recognition of their independence was the promulgation (February 19, 1858) of the Grondwet, or fundamental law of the Transvaal, of which one clause declares that—

> The people will admit of no equality of persons of colour with the white inhabitants, either in State or in Church.

Responsibilities, however, are not dismissed by giving them a month's notice. The differences with the Basutos, on the one hand, and persistent efforts on the part of the Boers to check the inroads of British trade in the interior, and constant quarrels as to boundaries, made this simple fact clear to successive Colonial Ministers, who were changed so frequently that Sir George Grey in 1861 wrote to the then Colonial Minister:

> I can only make the general remark that during the five years which have elapsed since I was appointed to my present office there have been at least seven Secretaries of State for the Colonial Department, each of whom held different views upon some important points of policy connected with this country.

It is a striking instance of what is called 'the irony of history' that the first Governor who really saw the problem in South Africa, and saw it whole, should have been one of sound Radical principles whose good work in South Africa was interrupted and practically nullified by a Conservative Colonial Secretary in the brief Conservative Administration which was in office in 1858.

Sir George Grey was appointed to the post of High Commissioner in the year 1854. He was practically the first of those called upon to govern South Africa who had had experience as a constitutional Regent in a British colony, as he had previously served in a similar capacity, first in South Australia and afterwards in New Zealand. Sir George Grey was a man of very independent views, and not very tractable. His temperament led him to treat with some contempt the

instructions he had received from Downing Street, issued by men who had never set foot in South Africa or made themselves acquainted with the elementary conditions of that dependency; nor was his impatience of control diminished by the fact that during his comparatively brief tenure of office he had, as he has recorded, to deal with more than half a dozen Colonial Secretaries; but at all times and in all places he had the rare quality of throwing himself heart and soul into the work before him, and of identifying himself with the interests of those whom he was called upon to govern. An important testimony to the esteem in which he was held is found in Dr. Karl Scherzer's 'Voyage of the *Novarro*,' which records the experience of a scientific expedition undertaken at the instance of the Arch-Duke Ferdinand Maximilian of Austria in the year 1857.

It is impossible (he says[1]) to speak in too high and eulogistic terms of Sir George Grey, whom we had the happiness at the time of our stay to find in the important position of Governor-General of the colony. Owing to the wisdom with which Sir George governed this important colony, he gained for himself the love and admiration of the people to such an extent that, after the expiration of the regularly fixed period of his office as Governor, they petitioned the Queen of England for his reappointment.

Dr. Scherzer adds at the close of his visit to Cape Colony a recognition of the work done by British administrators.

Such a colony (he says[2]) carries in itself the germs of a splendid development into a great and most enviable future. Provided with laws of a most liberal scope and institutions corresponding to the spirit of our times, which leave each colonist entirely at liberty to develop his powers and capabilities in whatever direction he pleases, Cape Colony must ere long stand forth as the pattern colony for all others in the different countries beyond sea, a majestic monument of the reward so justly due to the English nation for its policy in promoting the moral and material progress of mankind in the most remote corners of the earth.

Sir George Grey was, in no sense of the word, what is now termed a Jingo. He was a sane Imperialist, but he could hardly be classed with the expansionists. He was one of those who thought that the Empire, as it then existed, could supply work enough to tax all the available energies of Great Britain, if only that work were well done. He foresaw that though on the map England had a figurative authority over the whole of South Africa up to the Zambesi, her vacillating

[1] 'Voyage of the *Novarro*,' p. 204. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 260.

and uncertain policy in that country would threaten danger not only to our hold upon the vast area which we still claimed, but even upon the tiny peninsula the retention of which was held by men of all schools to be vital to our Imperial interests. Fifty years ago he endeavoured to enforce the reasons which Lord Milner has succeeded in bringing home to Downing Street—that, though there may be room for two or three flags in South Africa, there is and can be no place for two conflicting and irreconcilable systems. I shall have to deal at some length in a later chapter with the fundamental differences between the Dutch views of their duties towards their coloured neighbours and the British views. For the moment it is only necessary to point out that until it has been determined once and for all which of these two systems is to prevail in South Africa there is and can be no prospect of peace and prosperity. There had been occasions, not once or twice, or even thrice, only, when it had been absolutely within our power to impress indelibly the brand of British views upon the whole of South Africa. These opinions would never have been popular with the Dutch, but they would have been acquiesced in had we made it clear that we were determined to give effect to them. What was, is, and will for ever be impossible, is constant oscillation between the two systems, one day giving a free hand to Dutch sentiment, and the next insisting upon the acceptation of English political ideals; and it has proved equally disastrous to allow these two antipathetic systems to run concurrently in different parts of the country.

When Sir George Grey had been nearly five years in South Africa, he drew up a masterly memorandum in which he set forth conclusively the results of the hybrid policy which had hitherto been pursued. He pointed out that while on the one hand we still retained sovereignty over the whole of South Africa, and saddled ourselves with the responsibility for everything that might happen between Cape Agulhas and the Zambesi, we had voluntarily parted with the authority necessary to enable us to meet our obligations in the large and important districts of South Africa.

As Mr. Worsfold has pointed out in his 'History of South Africa,' the despatch in which Sir George Grey

unfolded his views of the South African problem to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (afterwards Lord Lytton) is one of the most instructive documents in the archives of the Colonial Office. It gave the Imperial Government the opportunity of realizing the situation from what may be called the scientific point of view, and to see it through the eyes of one who was familiar with the working of colonial institutions and it strenuously advocated a policy of Federation. I am most reluctantly compelled to excise all but these paragraphs:

CAPE TOWN,
November 19, 1858.

12. The colony of Natal is very fertile, but it is extremely limited in extent. The colony of the Cape of Good Hope is probably, as a whole, the least fertile part of South Africa, and its boundaries are now strictly defined, so that it admits of no extension. The countries which lie beyond the Orange River are very fertile and productive. Some of them are so to the highest degree. Their extent may be said to be boundless, and in many portions they are capable of carrying a very dense population. The population of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope is continually spreading into these countries. In a few years, therefore, they must, in products, resources, and number of inhabitants, far surpass the united colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal.

13. Although these European countries lying beyond our colonies are treated as separate nations, their inhabitants bear the same family names as the inhabitants of this colony, and maintain with them ties of the closest intimacy and relationship. They speak generally the same language—not English, but Dutch; they are for the most part of the same religion, belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church; they have the same laws—the Roman Dutch; they have the same sympathies, the same prejudices, the same habits, and frequently the same feelings regarding the native races, although marked and rapid changes in public opinion in relation to this subject are taking place, as also in reference to the increasing use of the English language and the adoption of English customs.

14. I think there can be no doubt that in any great public, or popular, or national question or movement, the mere fact of calling these people different nations would not make them so, nor would the fact of a mere fordable stream running between them sever their sympathies or prevent them from acting in unison. I think that many questions might arise in which, if the Government on the south side of the Orange River took a different view from that on the north side of the river, it might be very doubtful which of the two Governments the great mass of these people would obey.

15. The only bond of union which at present holds together these States, European and native, is the High Commissioner. He must generally be a stranger, unacquainted with the people, their language, or forms of thought, and with no general council to advise him,[1] nor with

[1] 'He has an executive council as Governor of the Cape Colony; but these gentlemen know little or nothing of the state of public opinion in other colonies or States.' The note is Sir George Grey's.

any means whatever of becoming acquainted with the general current of public opinion or feeling throughout this mass of States and people. A slight failure of temper or judgment on his part might at any time bring on a native war, a general rising of the natives, or a European rebellion.

For many reasons the moment chosen for the suggestion of a new departure seemed propitious. A Conservative Government was in office confronted by an Opposition which though numerically superior, had retreated from Downing Street in order to readjust one of those perennial squabbles which periodically convulsed the Liberal party. At the head of the Colonial Office was a man who had at least the gift of imagination. Lord Lytton, in the opinion of Lord Beaconsfield, who was no mean judge of character, should have achieved in political life a far greater success than crowned his marvellously prolific efforts as a novelist. His health, however, was never equal to the strain imposed on it by long Parliamentary hours and the wearing duties of office work. During the greater part of his nominal control of the Colonial Office the burden of work and responsibility fell upon his second in command, Lord Carnarvon, who was then one of the rising lights of the Conservative party. I shall have something to say later on as to the character and political capacities of the budding statesman who, according to Sir George Grey's biographer, was responsible for the rejection of the one reasonable solution of the problem which had yet presented itself. It is impossible, however, to refrain from noting the inexorable rule of irony in South Africa. Lord Glenelg was the most passionate advocate of the rights of black men who ever found a seat in the Cabinet. His misdirected efforts on their behalf resulted in the subjection of millions of Kaffirs to the uncontrolled authority of their bitterest enemies. The Governor who was sent out to supersede D'Urban, and to carry out a policy diametrically opposite to that of his predecessor, frankly admitted, after a year's experience, that had he been in D'Urban's position he would have acted as he acted. Lord Carnarvon, who rejected, almost with contumely, the plan of Sir George Grey in 1858, was destined, twenty years later, to break his heart over the failure of a scheme which was identical in all its main

principles with that which he repudiated in 1858. Mr. Chamberlain, the most determined and far-sighted Minister who has ever ruled at the Colonial Office, is now fighting to a finish a war which is the direct result of that defeat of the policy of Sir Bartle Frere, to which Mr. Chamberlain, twenty years ago, was more than a consenting party. Of all ironies the most ironical is that the Radicals of Great Britain express the warmest sympathy with the struggles of the most reactionary and unprogressive white race in the world, while the heirs of the great Tory party are crushing the only survivals of thorough-going and untempered Toryism. It is pathetic to read in the year 1901 Sir George Grey's estimate of the Dutch colonists given in paragraph 28:

> Ever since I have been in this country (he says) I have found an increasing willingness on the part of the inhabitants to provide for their own safety and defence. I attribute this to their having only recently enjoyed a free legislature, and I am entirely satisfied that if, with a generous confidence, they are permitted upon a still larger scale to take such measures as they think necessary for their own safety and for that of their friends and relations, whom they will never regard as a foreign nation, they will make still more ample and willing efforts to relieve Great Britain from all unnecessary charge in relation to South Africa.

A great deal of water, and some of it very muddy, has flowed between the bridges since that sanguine estimate was formed, yet there is no sound reason to believe that in 1858 it was an exaggerated or unreasonably optimistic account. A generation was growing up which had no personal experience of the causes which brought about the Great Trek. There were no specific grievances to be urged against the Imperial Government. Boer effort at civil administration had resulted in practical bankruptcy and in various internecine conflicts. The great Zulu power was developing its military organization on the frontier. The native menace seemed near and formidable, and had grown in magnitude and potency just in proportion as Great Britain had contracted her sphere of influence. There were scores of motives in 1858 which would have induced the whole Dutch population in South Africa to have hailed as a measure of salvation the scheme which, twenty years later, they rejected as an instrument of oppression.

Sir George Grey was recalled in something like ignominy, and though he was reinstated by the Whig Government which succeeded the short-lived Administration of Lord Derby, the condition of his reinstatement was the abandonment of the one remedy by which he was convinced the evils of South Africa could alone be cured. The difference between the policy of the Colonial Office under Whig control, and that of the same department when guided by Conservatives, was the difference between Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee. The treatment of Sir George Grey by the Whigs was that of a physician dismissed for recommending homeopathic treatment, and recalled on the express condition that he confined himself to the recognised methods of the faculty for which he was known to entertain a profound contempt.

To Lord Beaconsfield in the field of politics, and to the late Professor Seeley in that of letters, must be attributed what may be truly called the revival of the Imperial spirit in England. The original author of Imperialism was Chatham, and its most sturdy and determined champion had been the younger Pitt. Professor Seeley stimulated in one of the few history-making books of the day 'The Expansion of England,' the imagination of his fellow-countrymen which, though too often asleep, never dies. Lord Beaconsfield breathed the spirit evoked by Seeley into the dry bones of contemporary politics. Not very long ago Lord Rosebery, who at times seems to arrogate to himself the exclusive patronage of a sane Imperialism, was moved to rob Lord Beaconsfield by a rather petty larceny of the credit which is his due. He fastened upon a casual sentence in a private letter, and ignored a great speech made on a critical occasion some twenty years later. Lord Rosebery based his depreciation of Lord Beaconsfield's Imperial efforts upon an extract from a note to Lord Malmesbury which appeared in the latter's 'Memoirs of an ex-Minister.' An isolated passage in a confidential letter was wrested from its context and treated as if it formed part of a deliberate expression of policy. The words cited by Lord Rosebery were contained in a letter written from Hughenden in 1852, when Mr. Disraeli was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the first short-lived Administration of Lord Derby, which lasted exactly three

hundred days and five.[1] At that time Lord Cowley, our Ambassador at Paris, was negotiating with the French Government on the subject of commercial tariffs; we were engaged in a dispute with America about the Newfoundland fisheries; just such a difficulty with France was uneasily dormant; and in these circumstances, on August 13, 1852, Mr. Disraeli wrote thus:

'The fisheries affair is a bad business. Pakington's circular is not written with a thorough knowledge of the circumstances. He is out of his depth more than three marine miles from the shore.[2] These wretched colonies will all be independent too in a few years, and are a millstone round our neck.'

The allusion was to the North American colonies in general and to Newfoundland in particular. The letter was written in the very heyday of Cobdenism. The Great Exhibition, which it was thought was to inaugurate the millennium, had hardly closed. A large majority of Englishmen looked forward without regret to the hour when our American colonies would incorporate themselves with, or be absorbed by, the United States. It was not unnatural, therefore, that a member of a Ministry which held office on sufferance should be exasperated by troubles arising out of insignificant squabbles which threatened us with war against two of the greatest Powers of the world. No one, however, can pretend that these words convey even in their casual form the matured views of the great educator of the Tory party. It is not without significance that the passage which I am about to quote should have been ignored by Lord Rosebery, and have been cited quite recently by a French writer[3] as indicative of the whole tone and temper of Lord Beaconsfield's Imperial policy. In June, 1872, Lord Beaccnsfield foresaw the impending triumph of those principles for which he had fought so patiently and so well in

[1] Its successor was the famous Coalition Ministry under Lord Aberdeen, which suffered this country to drift into a most disastrous war, the effects of which are not yet spent.

[2] It is characteristic of our relations with our colonies that until the Premiership of Lord Aberdeen the offices of Secretary of State for the Colonies and for War were usually combined in the same person. Sir John Pakington was the last holder of the dual office, and the jibe contained in Disraeli's last sentence had reference to his ignorance of the law of nations regarding the three-mile limit at sea.

[3] *Cf.* M. Courcelle, 'Disraeli,' p. 151.

what seemed the endless Sahara of Opposition. A great meeting of Conservative associations was held at the Crystal Palace on June 24, 1872, and it was confidently expected that Lord Beaconsfield would there enunciate the programme to be adopted by his party at the not distant elections. It would lie far outside the scope of this book to analyze that great and pregnant speech throughout all its ramifications, but I am confident that it will be impossible to find in any earlier speeches by other statesmen a more lucid and authoritative exposition of what to-day we call Imperialism.

Gentlemen, there is another and second great object of the Tory party. If the first is to maintain the institutions of the country, the second is, in my opinion, to uphold the Empire of England. If you look to the history of this country since the advent of Liberalism—forty years ago—you will find that there has been no effort so continuous, so subtle, supported by so much energy, and carried on with so much ability and acumen, as the attempts of Liberalism to effect the disintegration of the Empire of England.

And, gentlemen, of all its efforts this is the one which has been the nearest to success. Statesmen of the highest character, writers of the most distinguished ability, the most organized and efficient means, have been employed in this endeavour. It has been proved to all of us that we have lost money by our colonies. It has been shown with precise, with mathematical demonstration, that there never was a jewel in the Crown of England that was so truly costly as the possession of India. How often has it been suggested that we should at once emancipate ourselves from this incubus! Well, that result was nearly accomplished. When these subtle views were adopted by the country under the plausible plea of granting self-government to the colonies, I confess that I myself thought that the tie was broken. Not that I for one object to self-government. I cannot conceive how our distant colonies can have their affairs administered except by self-government. But self-government, in my opinion, when it was conceded, ought to have been conceded as part of a great policy of Imperial consolidation. It ought to have been accompanied by an Imperial tariff, by securities, for the people of England for the enjoyment of the unappropriated lands which belonged to the Sovereign as their trustee, and by a military code which should have precisely defined the means and the responsibilities by which the colonies should be defended, and by which, if necessary, this country should call for aid from the colonies themselves. It ought, further, to have been accompanied by the institution of some representative council in the Metropolis which would have brought the colonies into constant and continuous relations with the Home Government. All this, however, was omitted, because those who advised that policy—and I believe their convictions were sincere—looked upon the colonies of England, looked even upon our connection with India, as a burden upon this country, viewing everything in a financial aspect, and totally passing by those moral and political considerations which make nations great, and by the influence of which alone men are distinguished from animals.

Well, what has been the result of this attempt during the reign of Liberalism for the disintegration of the Empire? It has entirely failed.

But how has it failed? Through the sympathy of the colonies with the mother-country. They have decided that the Empire shall not be destroyed, and in my opinion no Minister in this country will do his duty who neglects any opportunity of reconstructing as much as possible our colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalulable strength and happiness to this land. Therefore, gentlemen, with respect to the second great object of the Tory party also—the maintenance of the Empire—public opinion appears to be in favour of our principles—that public opinion which, I am bound to say, thirty years ago, was not favourable to our principles, and which, during a long interval of controversy, in the interval had been doubtful.

It is somewhat remarkable, too, that this speech should have been made about the time when Lord Kimberley as Colonial Minister was making a tentative and not too happy an experiment in expansion in connection with the diamond-fields of Griqualand West.

CHAPTER III

MR. FROUDE

In 1874 the General Election gave the Conservatives the first majority they had known since Peel's conversion to Free Trade had smashed the Tory party thirty years before. During that interval Mr. Disraeli, with consummate skill and adroitness, in circumstances the most depressing which ever confronted a statesman, had reconstructed and, as he put it, had 'educated' his party on the old Tory lines of the preceding century.

In 1874, then, for the first time, the Conservative party had an opportunity of putting into practice the policy which it had hitherto been constrained to preach from the Opposition benches or on public platforms. Lord Carnarvon, who was appointed to the Colonial Office, was a man of considerable intellectual endowment, and of refined and cultivated tastes; but he had never been vantaged by the rough-and-ready training of the House of Commons. The extreme sensitiveness of his conscience made him the most difficult of colleagues under the Cabinet system. It is, of course, impossible to define with any stringency the lengths to which the sacrifice of individual convictions should be carried for the securing of corporate unity; but it is certain that the principle of give-and-take must be recognised on a larger scale than commended itself to Lord Carnarvon, if the Cabinet system is to work at all. Lord Carnarvon had already resigned, on what, perhaps, might be considered a question of vital principle; and, at a peculiarly critical period in the history of his country, he was destined to shake the Government by a resignation, based, not upon principle, but

upon the particular means to be employed in giving effect to a policy which he approved. His second sacrifice to conscience was fated to have effects which he himself regarded with horror, and for which we are paying to-day in blood, in treasure, and in tears. For the time, however, his appointment was hailed with satisfaction. In most respects it was an excellent one. Lord Carnarvon was not new to the Colonial Office, for so long ago as 1858 he had been Political Under-Secretary under Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, whose ill-health compelled him to leave the direction of affairs largely to Lord Carnarvon. According to Mr. W. L. Rees, the somewhat prejudiced biographer of Sir George Grey, Lord Carnarvon, 'then in his twenty-eighth year, fresh from the schools, proud of his academic distinctions, accustomed to the praise of his peers, and the flattery and subservience of his inferiors, had entered public life with settled convictions as to his own ability and the sacred rights of his order.' The then High Commissioner of South Africa was Sir George Grey; and in the light of this quotation we may read Mr. Rees' note on Lord Carnarvon's great mistake—the recall of Sir George from his proconsulate.

Lord Carnarvon's mind was made up. Sir George Grey might have rendered great services to the nation, but he must thenceforth be dispensed with. To use the noble Earl's own words, which in after-years he did not hesitate to utter, 'Sir George Grey was a dangerous man.' His action might be successful, but the doom of any public servant who acted as Sir George Grey had done was, in Lord Carnarvon's mind, already decreed. He must be got rid of. He was a dangerous man. Thus were sown the seeds the harvest of which in 1877-81 England and South Africa were to reap in suffering and in tears. The mind of the young peer became so violently prejudiced against Sir George Grey as to preclude the possibility of his ever again employing this bold defier of all constituted authority in the service of the Crown. Only upon this theory is it possible to understand the acts of Lord Carnarvon in relation to Sir George Grey, and to affairs in South Africa on this occasion and in after-years.[1]

For the period between July, 1866, and February, 1867,

[1] It may be interesting to make one extract more from Mr. Rees' 'Life and Times of Sir George Grey' (ii. 304): 'Mr. Gladstone objected to some of the arguments and principles urged by Sir George Grey. The whole leaning of his mind appeared to be an apprehension of the too great extension of the Empire. The Imperial views of the majority found but little favour with Mr. Gladstone, and the policy which the Duke of Newcastle had enunciated as the unanimous decision of Ministers, when he fettered the reappointment of Sir George Grey to the Cape with the condition that the Governor must forego his plans of confederation, was strongly and entirely endorsed by Mr. Gladstone.'

when his restless conscience insisted on Resignation Number I., Lord Carnarvon was Colonial Secretary. In that brief period it was his fortune to have to submit to the House of Lords the resolutions necessary for confederating the British colonies of North America. It is not quite fair to say, as Sir Charles Adderley says,[1] that 'the Imperial Legislature acted externally, so to speak, to the transaction, having not to institute the arrangement, but only to ratify and confirm the colonial compact.' Lacking the encouragement of the Imperial Government, the idea of federating the Dominion must have remained an idea; so that Lord Carnarvon has the credit of having taken the first step in the direction of Imperal Federation. He was sincerely anxious to carry the work he had begun in 1867 a stage further in 1874. He determined, so far as lay in his power, to apply to South Africa the experiment which, consummated by himself, had worked so successfully in the Western Hemisphere. He must have recognised, ruefully, that the conditions of success had materially changed for the worse since, as Under-Secretary, he had spurned (in 1858) the policy which he was now seeking to accomplish. Obstacles to union which, in Sir George Grey's time, had been as molehills had now become kopjes, and were soon to be mountains. These, indeed, might have been moved by a judicious combination of faith and works; and had Lord Carnarvon's conscience permitted him to persevere, his policy might have been saved. His diagnosis of the condition of South Africa was wanting neither in shrewdness nor in accuracy. He realized that the anxiety of the Orange Free State for a partnership with British South Africa had given way to the liveliest resentment—a resentment due to the high-handedness with which Lord Kimberley, his predecessor in the Colonial Office, had disposed of the Free State's claim to the diamond-fields. He could not overlook the fact that the grant of responsible government to the Cape Colony, which had been confirmed a few years earlier, had set the colony upon a pedestal which would have to be lowered if, in a future scheme of consideration, she was only to rank as *prima inter pares*. As matter of fact, it was upon

[1] 'Colonial Policy,' p. 49.

this rock that the confederacy was wrecked. How far bad seamanship was responsible for the disaster we shall see.

The third obstacle, at that time the least formidable, but soon to assume colossal proportions, was the condition of the Transvaal. Here it is sufficient to say that the difficulty for the moment lay in settling the terms on which a bankrupt concern, with very dubious articles of association, was to be taken into a living partnership. Lord Carnarvon's first step towards a solution of the problem he had set himself was one which showed both judgment and statesmanship. It is not essential to my purpose to enter into a minute examination of the merits of the Diamond-Fields dispute. After wading conscientiously through interminable Blue-books, together with many dissertations written from many points of view, I must confess that the net result is best summed up in the expression that I came out of it all with a bad taste in the mouth. There were (as ever) a great many sides to the question. Lord Kimberley's behaviour was not due to that arrogant aggressiveness with which he was charged by Froude. I happened to be reading Froude's account of the diamond-fields transactions concurrently with an article upon that highly romantic historian by Mr. Leslie Stephen in the *National Review* for January, 1901. 'That Froude,' said Mr. Stephen, 'suffered from constitutional inaccuracy, made strange blunders even in copying a plain document, and often used his authorities in an arbitrary and desultory fashion, seems to be admitted.' I should prefer to say that Froude was deliberately untruthful; but, be this as it may, the passage might well stand as a criticism upon Froude's summary of our dispute with the Orange Free State:[1]

The English Ministry chose that particular moment to do what every Dutchman in South Africa regarded as a most outrageous injury. I must do the Ministry justice. They were deceived by false accounts of the people's wishes. They never dreamed of keeping the diamond-fields as a possession of the Crown. They meant it [*sic*] as a handsome present to the colony. With this view, they set aside the treaty, although it was but a short year old.[2] They flung away the old policy which kept the colony behind the Orange River. They seized the mine and the territory

[1] 'Two Lectures on South Africa,' pp. 33, 34.
[2] Treaty of Aliwal.

round it, excusing themselves by charging the Orange Free State with having stolen it from the native chief. Never was there such an illustration of the story of the Wolf and the Lamb. In forming their new province they cut into the Transvaal as well as the Free State. The two States refused to admit our right to plunder them, and the whole district was thrown into anger and confusion. The farmers did not know under what jurisdiction they were living. English and Dutch officials came in daily collision. The Orange Free State published a protest, and demanded the arbitration of some foreign Power. . . . We chose to throw away our old prudent policy; we broke faith, and broken faith never leads to good. Every misfortune which has fallen upon the country since—Kaffir wars, Zulu wars, the annexation of the Transvaal, and the confusion which now prevails—are distinctly traceable to this one unfortunate act.

Better far attribute all troubles, past, present, and to come, to the fall of man. For my purpose, and my readers' enlightenment, it is better to take the account given by Dr. Theal, who, whatever faults may be laid to his charge, cannot be accused of viewing British policy in South Africa with a too kindly eye:

In March, 1869, the 'Star of South Africa' was obtained from a Korana Hottentot, who had been in possession of it for a long time without the least idea of its value, except as a powerful charm. It was a magnificent brilliant of eighty-three carats weight when uncut, and was readily sold for £11,000. From all parts of South Africa men now began to make their way to the banks of the Lower Vaal to search for diamonds, and trains of waggons conveying provisions and goods were to be seen on every highway to the interior. Some of the diggers were fortunate in amassing wealth, but this was by no means the case with all. Diamond-digging, in fact, was like a great lottery with a few prizes and many blanks. But it had a powerful attraction, and shortly many hundreds of adventurers from Europe and America were also engaged in it. The quiet, simple, homely life of the South African farm and village in olden times, rarely disturbed except by wars with Bantu tribes, passed away for ever, and a bustling, struggling, restless mode of existence was rapidly taking its place. The wealth of the country was enormously increased, and diamonds soon obtained a high place in the exports; but it may be questioned if the people are on the whole as happy as they were before. The southern bank of the Lower Vaal was Free State territory, but the ownership of the northern bank was disputed. Before the discovery of diamonds it was regarded as of so little value that no actual government existed there, though the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, the Batlapin tribe, and the Griqua captain, Nicolas Waterboer, all claimed the ground. The consequence was that each mining camp on that side of the stream formed a kind of government for itself, and a great deal of confusion and lawlessness was the result. . . . Most of the diggers were British subjects, so that Her Majesty's High Commissioner considered it his duty to interfere in the interests of order. At that time one of the shrewdest men in South Africa was agent for the Griqua captain, Nicolas Waterboer, and on behalf of his client had laid claim to a large part of the Orange Free State, including the locality in which the diamond-mines were situated. No pretension could be more shadowy; but when Mr. Arnot, on behalf of Waterboer, offered the territory to the

British Government, it came to be regarded on one side at least as having some real foundation.

The High Commissioner proposed arbitration, which President Brand declined. The territory which Mr. Arnot claimed south of the Vaal, he said, had been part of the Free State ever since the Convention of 1854; before that date it had been part of the Orange River Sovereignty, and some of the farms in it were held under British titles issued at that time. Nicolas Waterboer and his people lived far away, and, as well as could be ascertained, had never occupied ground there. Under these circumstances he would not admit that there could be any question of ownership. The right of the State to land beyond the Vaal, however, he was willing to submit to arbitration, as it had been acquired by purchase, and the seller's title might be open to doubt.

While the High Commissioner and the President were corresponding on this subject, Mr. Marthinus Wessel Pretorius, who was then President of the South African Republic, agreed to submit some disputes between that country and the Baralong Batlapin and Griquas to arbitration, in consequence of which a court was appointed, with Mr. Keate, Governor of Natal, as final umpire, and proceedings were opened at the little village of Bloemhof, on the northern bank of the Vaal. The Free State Government was not represented in the court.

The interests involved were greater than were recognised at the time. It was supposed that the sovereignty of some of the diamond-mines was the great question at issue; now it is seen that access by Great Britain to the distant interior was also involved. On one side the proceedings were a perfect farce. President Pretorius and his attorney did nothing whatever to work up their case; they did not attempt to meet evidence that might have been disproved with the greatest ease; they even put in a spurious document given to them by one of their opponents purposely to befool them. On the other side was Mr. Arnot, who knew exactly what to withhold as well as what to bring forward. The result was that Mr. Keate, acting solely on the evidence before him, gave judgment against the South African Republic, and, in defining the territories of the disputants, included within Nicolas Waterboer's boundary the part of the Free State which that captain claimed. As soon as the Keate award was issued (October, 1871), Sir Henry Barkly, who was then High Commissioner, proclaimed Waterboer's country a British dependency, with boundaries enclosing the mines along the Vaal, and at Dutoitspan, De Beers, and Kimberley. An armed force was sent to take possession of it, and the Free State officials withdrew under protest. The territory, which was named Griqualand West, then became a Crown colony; it remained in that condition until 1880, when it was annexed to the Cape Colony, of which it now forms a part

Some time after Griqualand West came under the British flag a special court was created to decide upon conflicting claims to ground. For many weeks evidence was taken, and the most minute research was made into the history of the land and its people. When at length judgment was given, all claims within the diamond-mining area that rested on grants by Waterboer were thrown out, because that captain never had any rights there.[1]

It must not be assumed that Dr. Theal's summary of the dispute is not open to objections. Those who would wish to see the other side of the question might properly

[1] 'South Africa,' p. 323.

consult Mr. Frederick Boyle's 'To the Cape for Diamonds,' which contains the arguments on the other side, and as it was written in 1872, shortly after the settlement, it cannot be said to have taken any bias from the political events to which the dispute gave rise. One brief passage may be quoted as illustrating an aspect of the position which Dr. Theal ignores:

The necessity of some system of government amongst the crowd became apparent. The Orange River Free State claimed jurisdiction over the larger space, and the Transvaal Republic exercised rights over the remainder. Practically there was no government at all. The inhabitants of the district, even had they not been employed in digging with all their might, could have done no police duty for their own protection, seeing they were scattered in farmhouses twenty miles or so apart. Fortunately, these early diggers were mostly Boers, men sober, stupid, hard-working, easy to govern. Many of them had their families, and nearly all lived as respectably as possible. . . . Each little colony of diggers chose its own committee of government and passed its own rules, the greater part of which were practically identical; they were framed on the model of those in use at the Australian fields.[1]

For the rest, it will be noted that Dr. Theal lays stress upon the inadequate way in which the case of the Transvaal was got up, and adduces the results of civil trials as proof of the baselessness of Waterboer's claims. This, however, cannot possibly be made a ground for impeaching the good faith of the British Government or its representative. The Transvaal voluntarily submitted the case to arbitration, and the incapacity of the Boer representatives to work up their case, even if it be admitted, has really nothing to do with the moral aspect of the question. To show the evil consequences of reckless writing, it may be well to give a brief extract from 'A Century of Wrong,' published by Mr. Secretary Reitz on the eve of the war.

To return to the diamond-fields, as Froude remarks the ink of the Treaty of Aliwal was scarcely dry when diamonds were discovered in large quantities in a district which we had ourselves treated as part of the Orange territory. Instead of honestly saying that the British Government relied on its superior strength, and on this ground demanded the territory in question, which contained the richest diamond-fields in the world, it hypocritically pretended that the real reason of its depriving the Free State of the diamond-fields was that they belonged to a native, notwithstanding the fact that this contention was falsified by the judgment of the English courts. There was a notion also, says Froude, that the

[1] 'To the Cape for Diamonds,' p. 86.

finest diamond-mine in the world ought not to be lost to the British Empire. The ground was thereupon taken from the Boers, and 'from that day no Boer in South Africa has been able to trust to British promises.' Later, when Brand went to England, the British Government acknowledged its guilt, and paid £90,000 for the richest diamond-fields in the world, a sum which scarcely represents the daily output of the mines.[1]

This preposterous statement of the case is not much worse than Dr. Theal's, who says:

President Brand then went to England, and laid his case before the Imperial authorities. In brief, it was this: That Great Britain had taken the land from the Free State under pretence that it belonged to Waterboer, and that a British court, after careful examination, had since decided that Waterboer had no right to it. The reply which he received was to the effect that it was a necessity for the paramount Power in South Africa to be in possession of the diamond-mines, but he would receive £90,000 from Griqualand West as a solatium.[2]

Now, as matter of fact, there is no foundation for the suggestion that Lord Carnarvon either confessed the guilt of England or justified the high-handedness attributed to Lord Kimberley on the ground that the possession of the diamond-fields was essential to the paramount Power. The truth is, Lord Carnarvon, in his anxiety to secure the federation of South Africa, sought to remove the irritation which the dispute had undoubtedly caused in the minds of the Free Staters. This amiable desire was quickened by a despatch which Sir Henry Barkly had addressed to Lord Kimberley immediately after the establishment of a responsible Government in Cape Colony. In this document, Sir Henry referred to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's despatch of February 11, 1859, refusing to assent to Sir George Grey's proposal for confederation, and submitted that the question had now assumed a widely different aspect, and that 'upon the assumption by this colony of the full responsibility of managing its own affairs, it will become both just and politic that no obstacle should be interposed to the reunion of the Free State with the parent colony in any way it may be agreed upon.' Sir Henry further stated

> 'that Mr. Hamelberg, the representative of the Orange Free State, had informed the Federation Commission that if self-government were established at the Cape

[1] 'A Century of Wrong,' p. 20.

[2] 'South Africa,' p. 327.

the main difficulty in the way of the federal union of the Orange Free State with the Cape would be removed, but had declared at the same time that the action of the High Commissioner in taking the Basutos under British protection, together with the discovery of the diamond-fields, had modified the strong feeling which had previously existed in favour of annexation.'[1]

In spite, however, of Lord Carnarvon's natural desire to remove any cause of friction which might injure the prospects of federation, he carefully refrained from casting any doubts upon the policy of his predecessor, and refused to reopen the question of ownership of the territory transferred to the authority of the Queen. In his first despatch to President Brand, he stated that the records of the Colonial Office showed

'that this measure [the annexation] was forced upon Her Majesty's advisers by the knowledge that there was at the time a great multitude of British subjects suddenly accumulated in a territory close to the borders of Her Majesty's dominions, living without law or order, or any stable protection for life or property, and forced to extemporize for themselves such a system of government as the rough elements of the community would permit.'

After pointing out that it was impossible for the diggers themselves to have established a stable form of government, and denoting the difficulties which the Orange Free State would have experienced 'from undertaking the due and effectual control of a large and somewhat turbulent community of different races, but principally of British extraction,' he concluded with these words:

'I should fail in my duty did I not impress upon you that it is beyond my power to recommend to the Crown the withdrawal of these privileges and the transfer of many thousands of British subjects to the jurisdiction of the Orange Free State.'

This was President Brand's reply:[2]

'I beg to state that I shall be prepared, upon

[1] 'Life and Times of Sir J. C. Molteno,' i. 184. [2] June 21, 1876.

the payment of an adequate sum of money by Her Majesty's Government, to agree to a line by which the diamond-fields and sufficient territory will remain under the jurisdiction of Her Majesty's Government whilst we retain as many of our burghers as possible, and do not give up more land than is absolutely necessary.'

In view of what has been said about the objection to the Imperial factor in South Africa, it is interesting to note that the Brand of that date was not amongst its opponents. 'I do not think,' he said in the same despatch, 'that our negotiations need be delayed for the decision of the Cape Parliament, as the question which we wish to settle is one between Her Majesty's and our Governments, which can be best arranged between them.'

On August 5, 1876, Lord Carnarvon was able to write thus to Sir Henry Barkly:

> 'I intimated my willingness to undertake that a reasonable sum should be paid to the State, not as recompense for any admitted wrong, but in consideration of the injury which the President and the people of the State represented that they had sustained, and in order to remove for ever any impression that the British occupation of the territory (which under the pressure of circumstances had necessarily been carried out summarily, and without the possibility of lengthened explanations) was in any sense an unfriendly act or one which could be hereafter complained of. . . . In order to advance matters, I determined to have recourse (for the particular purpose of facilitating an understanding as to the sum to be paid) to the services of Mr.[1] Donald Currie, whom I found to possess the confidence of the President, and to whom, as occupying an intermediary position, it was of course much more practicable to explain the limit beyond which Her Majesty's Government would not be prepared to go.'

Perhaps, however, the best and the most conclusive answer of all to the reckless assertions of Mr. Froude and the 'put-up' invectives of Mr. Reitz is to be found in the

[1] Now Sir Donald Currie.

memorandum of agreement between Lord Carnarvon and President Brand, signed on July 13, 1876. It ran as follows:

> 'The Right Honourable the Earl of Carnarvon and His Honour President Brand hereby expressing their cordial satisfaction with the foregoing arrangement as a just and fair settlement in full of the question referred to herein and heretofore in dispute, and all grounds for controversy now being removed, the Right Honourable the Earl of Carnarvon and His Honour President Brand, for themselves and for Her Majesty's Government and for the Orange Free State, agree to seek by friendly co-operation hereafter all that can advance the common interests of their respective countries.'

And yet five years later Mr. Froude, who was in a peculiarly good position for knowing all that had taken place, could write of the result of these negotiations, that no Boer could hereafter trust British promises! Truly, they who dispute his conclusions upon Henry VIII. and Mary Queen of Scots have a great deal in their favour when they demand another assurance than Bardolph's, for that, like Master Dumbleton, they 'like not the security.'

I have dealt at length with this controversy because its discussion serves a twofold purpose: it illustrates the spirit in which pro-Boer history is written, and it proves that Lord Carnarvon entered upon his federating policy with a resolve to respect, not only the rights, but the prejudices of the South African Dutch. That, indeed, is made abundantly clear in his note to President Brand (August 12, 1876), in which he discloses the principle of his proposed scheme of federation: 'My proposal would be, in fact, that while coming into the British Empire the State should retain its own flag and its own language, and that the national sentiment . . . should be respected in all possible ways. And, further, that the State should, as a consequence, receive its reasonable share of the federal expenditure defrayed from the Custom duties levied in the port of the federation.'

But if Lord Carnarvon showed good judgment and sound statesmanship in his dealings with the Orange Free State, he was singularly unfortunate in his choice of an

informal agent to promote the cause of federation inside Cape Colony. I am not concerned to discuss whether or not Froude's qualifications were those of a great historian. It is more to the purpose to note that they were such as distinctly unfitted him for the work he was asked by Lord Carnarvon to do in South Africa. That 'partisan imagination' which was Froude's is as much out of place in a Commissioner as it would be in the author of Bradshaw's Guide. No one in his senses would ever have bought an estate in Italy on the strength of one of Turner's Italian pictures, and no statesman should ever have dreamed of basing a policy upon the literary faculty of Froude. For divers reasons the problem was exceeding delicate; its solution was largely a matter of tact, and of tact Froude did not so much as know the meaning. A *fervent* of Carlyle, as Lord Carnarvon might have known, he started on his work with certain predispositions which were hardly conducive to impartiality. Froude shared Carlyle's views upon the advantages of an intelligent and humane system of slavery, and he shared Carlyle's contempt for Parliaments.

Now, when he was appointed to advise and report on the prospects of federation in South Africa, Cape Colony was in the novel enjoyment of what he would have considered the more than doubtful privilege of responsible Government. While on the one hand it is quite clear that Mr. Froude was in Lord Carnarvon's confidence, it is, even at this date, by no means certain how far the Colonial Secretary enjoyed the full confidence of his emissary. It is hard to believe that he was cognizant of, and still harder to believe that he authorized, the 'private and personal' letter which Froude wrote to Mr. Molteno, the first Premier of Cape Colony, on the eve of his second (and disastrous) trip to South Africa. It is dated April 29, 1875, is written from 5, Onslow Gardens, and appears for the first time, so far as I know, in 'The Life and Times of Sir J. C. Molteno.'[1] After stating that Lord Carnarvon's resolution, for which 'I am myself in part responsible, and Lord Carnarvon's desire "to form South Africa" in a confederate Dominion

[1] Vol. i., pp. 337-339

with complete internal self-government,' the writer goes on to dot his i's and cross his t's:

After an open step of this kind in the direction of conciliation, I conceived the natural interests of all parties would assume their proper form, and that in a short time the entire country would gravitate into union. Supposing a confederation formed, however, and as a result of it the creation of a strong Dominion Parliament, the Natal affair showed that there remained the possibility and the likelihood of a collision with Great Britain on the treatment of the native races at no distant time, and that this ought to be provided for beforehand. Even if there were to be no confederation, it was most desirable that there should be a close alliance and community of purpose and policy on the Native Question between you and the Free States. The differences of system as to right of having guns was one of the main causes of the Natal disturbance. The interference of Wodehouse on behalf of the Basutos was a main grievance at Bloemfontein, while Southey and Burgers were treating for rival alliances with the native chiefs, to the serious injury, and perhaps danger, of the whole interior.

I suppose that if you were all left to yourselves, and if we were out of the way, you would arrive rapidly at a common principle on these questions and agree to support one another. I was satisfied that you were better judges than we could be how the native races could best be managed, and that the most desirable thing for us as well as you was that we should interfere as little as possible. The same delegates, therefore, who were to meet to consider the Griqualand affairs I thought might expeditiously sketch in outline the course which you would pursue if South Africa were wholly your own. I had not, and have not, the slightest fear that you would wish for anything to which England could rationally object. The British Parliament could then abandon all its pretensions to interference. You would be told that within the lines then laid down you were absolute masters of your own affairs. The High Commissioner's office could, if you desired it, be abolished or merged in that of the Prime Minister for the day. Let this be done, and I ventured to assure Lord Carnarvon that the Queen would find in no part of her dominions more loyal, more conservative, or more thoroughly attached subjects than she would find in South Africa. Such very briefly is the meaning of the proposed Committee of Delegates. I shall myself be with you again, I hope, in the middle of June. I sail in the *Walmer Castle* on June 23. If you think I have been interfering presumptuously in the affairs of a country of which I know so little, you will not conceal it from me. The responsibility will fall back upon myself, and I have that high opinion of your statesmanlike insight and keen and powerful intelligence that I shall readily acknowledge my own error and do my best to repair it. My hope, however, is that you will form a less unfavourable opinion, and that you will lend your powerful assistance towards carrying out a scheme which has no object beyond putting the fortunes of South Africa entirely in the hands of its own people. President Burgers, to whom I spoke slightly on the subject at Pretoria when it first occurred to me, appeared entirely to approve. I am sorry that he will be absent when I arrive, but I trust his absence will not prevent the acting President from sending a representative. For yourself, I cannot doubt that any services which you may render in a matter of so much consequence will be gratefully recognised here.

The tactlessness displayed in the concluding sentence, in

which Mr. Froude suggests the possibility of Mr. Molteno's being squared (a suggestion which he repeated on his first interview with the Prime Minister), lost nothing by the fact that similar overtures were made simultaneously to Mr. Molteno's bitterest political opponent, Mr. Paterson! So clumsily had the preliminaries been concluded, that Lord Carnarvon's precipitate action, due largely to Froude's inspiration, arrayed against his policy many of the elements which, judiciously handled, might have been found supporting it. Mr. (now Sir Gordon) Sprigg, for instance, who was shortly to succeed Mr. Molteno as Sir Bartle Frere's right-hand man, spoke as follows in the debate on Lord Carnarvon's scheme of confederation :[1]

Let us say, rather, to the Imperial Government, Arrange your difficulties and complications with the Dutch Republics yourselves, and you must accept the responsibility ; and not by pressing the Conference try and cast them upon us. You are in trouble with the affairs of Natal, brought about by your own mismanagement, and by the course you are taking in that colony you are sowing the seed of a more plentiful crop of troubles for the future, for you are not trusting the people of that colony, but you are striking down its representative institutions, and setting up instead thereof a despotic kind of government, which will create still greater difficulties than those you now have to encounter. You are in trouble in Griqualand West because you established there a form of government unfit for Englishmen in any part of the world, and because you sent to carry it out men who showed by their past career that they were disqualified to make the best of even a bad form of government. Let us say to the Imperial Government that when all these differences are adjusted and all these difficulties removed, and when there is a general intelligent feeling throughout South Africa that a union of all the colonies and States is desirable, then will be the time for the representatives of the people in the Legislature and for the Government at their head to make certain proposals.

And Mr. Solomon, whose position in Cape politics was one of singular independence, spoke to this purpose in the same debate :[2]

Those who have read the articles on the colonies by Mr. Froude—and here let me say that I speak of that gentleman with respect, for I have a very high opinion of his character and abilities—will know that he has considered that the colonies have too much power of self-government granted to them, and that in some things, as in the Crown lands in the colonies, the British people have been deprived of what is their heritage, and that the disposal of them should not be left in the hands of the colonists alone. I mention this as an indication, seeing that Mr. Froude is to be Imperial Commissioner at this conference of what seems to be

[1] 'Life and Times of Sir John Molteno,' vol. i., p. 351. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 352.

the policy of the present Conservative Government, which is in my opinion a policy of interference with the domestic concerns of this colony, and perhaps of other colonies.

Had Mr. Froude had eyes to see anything but what he wanted to see, or ears to hear the sound of any voice but his own, he would not have done the State the great disservice that he did. He arrived in the colony while the excitement caused by Lord Carnarvon's premature action was still seething, and he at once proceeded to identify himself with the Opposition, and even allowed himself to be described at a public dinner as the 'representative of Lord Carnarvon, of the British Government, and of Queen Victoria.' He made speeches up and down the country whose offensiveness he scarce realized. He had, it is true, some sort of glimmering of the irregularity of his conduct, for he indulged in an apology which remains his condemnation:

I was conscious that,[1] in acting on my own judgment in opposition to the warning of the Governor and of the wishes, if not the injunctions, of Mr. Molteno, I should be incurring a grave responsibility. I recognised the extreme impropriety of flying in the face of the established Government of the colony. . . . For many days I could not decide what I should do. I saw Mr. Molteno repeatedly. I assured him that your Lordship had desired that the management of the Conference should be in his hands. He might arrange the representation as he pleased; he might impose whatever limits he liked on the subjects to be discussed, provided he did not exclude the consideration of the quarrel with the independent States. I repeated that in proposing the Conference your Lordship had conceived that you would be meeting his own wishes, and would expect me to conform to them in the arrangement of the details. Nothing that I could say produced the slightest effect. . . . I had no communication to make, for your despatch was already before the world, disfigured only by the misconstructions which had been placed upon it. I had not the slightest desire to connect myself with the leaders of the Opposition in Parliament. I had a very great respect for Mr. Molteno's abilities and character. I thought, indeed, it would be a serious misfortune to the colony should it lose his services. I had been invited to a public dinner in Cape Town. You gave me no direction how to act in a situation so entirely unanticipated. I decided at last, entirely on my own responsibility, to accept the invitation, provided that it had no party character, and that the Minister and the Governor should be invited also. I was aware that I was running a personal risk, but I knew also that, if I were doing wrong, I alone was to be blamed, and in the interests of the truth it could be of advantage to no one that a false impression should pass undisputed. . . . I had a simple story to tell; I told it as plain as I could. What I said was published in the provincial papers, and the effect undoubtedly was to increase the agitation which had already commenced in condemnation of the Ministers' action.

[1] C. 1399, p. 69 *et seq.*

Anyone conversant with the exaggerated sensitiveness of colonial opinion, even to ordinary criticism, much less the appearance of dictation, will not need telling that Mr. Froude's active intervention in local controversial politics caused great irritation. Indeed, the resentment he roused was not confined to those opposed to Lord Carnarvon's policy, but was felt by many independent men who were in sympathy with the objects of confederation, and were by no means enamoured of the narrow provincialism of Mr. Molteno. As for Ministers, finding the semi-official Imperial agent exploited as a public speaker at Opposition gatherings, they were, as was natural, greatly incensed, and on March 14, 1876, a formal minute embodied their disapproval:

> They felt constrained to place on record their opinion that the presence in this colony of a gentleman acting under secret instructions from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, speaking in the name of the Imperial Government, writing letters conveying the thanks of Her Majesty's Government to the political opponents of the legally constituted Government in the colonies, and armed with the prestige conferred on him by his apparently official status, denouncing the conduct of the Ministry at public meetings, was incompatible with the successful administration of the form of government conferred by the Constitution, detrimental to the peace and well-being of the colonies, and . . . without parallel or precedent in the history of colonies possessing responsible government.

Mr. Froude was constitutionally incapable of understanding how a man like himself, actuated by the highest motives, could possibly give offence; and there was a note of aggrieved surprise in his reply to the minute:

> So far from encroaching on the self-government of the colony, your Lordship's policy, I was well aware, had but one object, to extend the principle which has worked so beneficially within its present lines to the remaining South African States: to pass over to all British subjects in South Africa as complete a control of their own affairs as is enjoyed in Canada or New Zealand, and to remove all occasion for Imperial interference with the internal administration of any portion of the southern continent.

The mischief Mr. Froude did was involuntary, and the flagrant perversions of contemporary history which are to be found in his records, articles, and books, notably in 'Oceana,' must be attributed to that native inability to see more in the text before him than he wanted to see, or than it was essential to his immediate purposes that he should see. In him the

artist had ever the whip-hand of the historian, and it would have been labour lost to ask a plain statement of fact, as it would be labour lost to attempt to frame the business diary of a Roman tradesman from the 'Fasti' of Ovid.

In the draft of this book I had set forth at some length the story of Mr. Froude's innumerable escapades while engaged in this extraordinary mission. They are omitted here for considerations of space. They are interesting as bearing on the South African problem and the misfortunes which have attended subsequent attempts to solve it. As, however, the episode was not essential I have excised it with some reluctance—due, I am free to confess, mainly to its entertaining character. Those, however, who would care to study an imaginative historian, masquerading as a statesman will be amply rewarded by the perusal of Mr. Froude's despatch of January 10, 1876, which will be found in Blue-book, C. 1,399. If in the circumstances of time the success of Lord Carnarvon's admirably-conceived project was doubtful, Mr. Froude's astounding ineptitude for the task of recommending it rendered it impossible.

Two errors of judgment—in themselves not vital—wrecked an intrinsically meritorious scheme which, put into practice, would have saved us from most of the storm and tempest through which we are still battling. The first was due to the ease with which the Dominion of Canada had been brought into being. What Lord Carnarvon failed to realize was the enormous difference between giving effect to the aspirations of a colony and obtaining the assent of a colony to the wishes of the Imperial Government, even when the policy, the object, and the necessity were identical. In the minds of intelligent Canadians, whatever their origin, for Canada there was no third way between consolidation and absorption. There was not room in the north of the Western Hemisphere for two independent republics, and for Canada to cut the painter that bound her to the Empire was tantamount to a decision to enter, soon or late, into the United States of the West. No Englishman could have blamed the Canadians if they had chosen absorption, much as we should have regretted the choice. Nor is it possible to say to which side the balance would have inclined, had not the

memory of the Civil War been very fresh in the Canadian mind. Happily for the expansion of the Empire, Canada determined to maintain the old connection. Such a determination involved confederation, if the Dominion were to hold its own in material progress with the United States. Canada, therefore, worked out her own scheme of consolidation, and Lord Carnarvon's task was the easy and agreeable one of ratifying the wishes of a practically unanimous colony. A far-sighted South African might have seen that, south of the equator as west of the meridian, the inexorable current of circumstances was setting in the same direction. But none did see it. Cape Colony was in the first enjoyment of the qualified blessings of a representative government. The Cape Colonists then, as now, regarded themselves as the predestined custodians of South African interests from Cape Agulhas to the Zambesi, and from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. A certain condescending patronage over the independent Republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, coupled with a supercilious recognition of the inferior status of Natal, suited their aspirations better than a regulated scheme of confederation, in which Cape Colony would be only *prima inter pares*, and would be liable to forfeit that primary itself in the event of the discovery of such sources of natural wealth as the diamond-fields already were, and the Rand was presently to be. Lord Carnarvon should have realized that the natural tenacity of colonials, intensified by the novelty of their new privileges and responsibilities, would require very delicate handling. The Canadian precedent was like a marriage of convenience and affection which had long been contemplated, and the banns of which had been thrice read without eliciting opposition. Downing Street was in this case merely the Registrar's Office, and Lord Carnarvon's function was confined to blessing the happy pair. In regard to South Africa, however, he stood in the position of a suitor who, despite the prosperity of his outlook, must yet employ all such wiles and blandishments as are incident to suitoring, when the idea is novel and the lady coy. As he wooed by proxy, was most unlucky in his deputy, and offered marriage in such plain language as were better fitted to a summons, he failed to win his bride. Even to the

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last he could not understand why Cape Colony had not thrown herself without so much as a pretence at diffidence into the arms of the truculent and soaring deputy whom he had chosen for what another man would have held a delicate negotiation. Mr. Froude, he said in a despatch to Sir Henry Barkly,[1] written after Mr. Froude's return to England, and after he had heard from his own lips the story of his unsuccessful courtship,

> has possessed from first to last my full confidence, accorded to him no less on account of his high character and ability than because of the unhesitating earnestness with which he has contended for the promotion of South African interests, and his general concurrence in my view of the manner in which those interests could best be advanced; and, whilst unfettered in the exercise of his own discretion as to the events of the moment, with regard to which it is obvious that I could not give, and for which I purposely abstained from giving, detailed instructions, he has been able to explain the general tenor of my wishes and objects with an eloquence and fulness and ability to which, hereafter if not now, ample credit, I am convinced, will be given. And now that his visit has terminated, I gladly take this opportunity to express my recognition of the great and lasting benefit which he has conferred upon South Africa by his untiring energy, by the high qualities which he has brought to bear on the particular questions of the time, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, and by the clear and forcible manner in which on many occasions he has inculcated a policy and principles not unnaturally lost sight of by many under the more immediate pressure of local questions. And if, indeed, he has been misunderstood and misrepresented in some quarters, I trust that he will have been well rewarded by the knowledge that he was taking part in no common or insignificant question; and by the consciousness of having done his utmost to render those measures in which he has been engaged really beneficial to all concerned in them, of whatever nationality or race.

It sounds like irony, but it is irony of that Sophoclean type which means one thing to the speaker and its very opposite to the listener. It was in every way most unfortunate, though anyone can see now that it was inevitable, that these negotiations should have miscarried. A little more knowledge, a little more tact, a little more consideration for colonial susceptibilities, and the path to confederation might have been cleared of many of its stones and most of its thorns.

No man, it is said, is ever written down except by himself; certainly none has ever penned a more convincing testimonial to his own unfitness for the task which he under-

[1] C. 1399, p. 88.

took than Mr. Froude in his 'Two Lectures on South Africa,' delivered before the Edinburgh Philosophical Institute on January 6 and 9, 1880.[1] It often happens in our administrative system that a member of the great Civil Service is appointed to a post which he does not like, to carry out a policy which he does not approve. How far conscientious scruples demand the sacrifice of a man's career depends, of course, upon circumstances, and in the last resort must be left for casuistry to decide. There can, however, be no question about the inconvenience (to use no heavier expression) of a distinguished man's volunteering his services to a statesman who wishes to carry out a policy to which the distinguished man is bitterly opposed. Yet such, according to his own confession, was the position of Mr. Froude. Lord Carnarvon, as we have seen, was most anxious to establish just such a self-governing dominion in South Africa as that which had come into being under his auspices in Canada. Here is Mr. Froude's view of the possibilities of such a confederation:

The Colonial Office had long been anxious to confederate the States of South Africa and to form a self-governed Dominion there like that which had succeeded so well in Canada. If the Republics could be induced to join, all difficulties would be at an end. . . . The advantages of such an arrangement were obvious at home, and we are apt to assume that, our views being always reasonable, other people will see things as we do. Other people, unfortunately, are not always reasonable. The Dutch States I knew to be most unreasonably fond of independence. *The Cape Dutch everywhere object to our presence at the Cape in any shape.*[2] The two Republics were free of us, and I thought it most unlikely that with their own consent they would come back under our flag. They were ready, if they were well treated, for an alliance with us; they were willing to modify their native administration to please us. The Queen's subjects they would not agree to be for any bribe that we might hold out to them.

Nor did I think the Colony would like confederation. At present it had all the advantages of the situation. The trade of the interior States passed through the colonial ports; the duties were levied there on every bale of goods that passed up to the Free States and the diamond-fields. The colony kept those duties—keeps them still. Under confederation it would have to account for them. The colony was rich; it was out of harm's way. Natal might be in danger from the natives; the Cape Colony was in little danger, if in any. Why should the Cape make itself responsible for keeping the peace in Natal and in the interior States? The colony, I thought, would relieve us of the diamond-fields if the

[1] New edition, with an introduction by Margaret Froude, 1900.
[2] The italics are mine.

dispute with the Free States could be first arranged. More than this I did not think it would do.[1]

Such being Mr. Froude's story of probabilities, let us see his opinion as to the desirability of success:

Perhaps my views of what was probable were coloured by my conviction of what was right. I did not then, and I do not now, think that we ought to establish a self-governed Dominion in South Africa. Self-government in South Africa means the government of the natives by the European colonists, and that is not self-government. The parallel with New Zealand does not hold. The Maoris are few and are dying out; the Kaffirs and Zulus are in millions, and are increasing faster than the whites. The Europeans, I do not doubt, could control them, but they could, and would, control them only by measures which Great Britain would never allow to be carried out in the Queen's name. It is agreed that we must keep the garrison still at Cape Town to protect the naval station, and as long as there is a British regiment in South Africa it will be employed, if we insist on setting up a Dominion Parliament there, in supporting a system of government which for half a century we have repudiated and condemned.

If a line could be drawn across from Table Bay to False Bay, if the Cape Town peninsula was ours, and ours only, and the whole of the rest of the country was entirely independent of us, as I heartily wish it was, then I would leave South Africa to the South Africans, white or coloured, to shape out its own fortunes. The responsibility would then be theirs; but as long as the government is carried on in the Queen's name the responsibility will cling to us, and therefore, for myself, I would wait to establish a South African Dominion till the law should know no distinction of colour, and the black races can be enfranchised, as the slaves have been enfranchised in the Southern States of the American Union.[2]

Since Mr. Froude went upon his mission prepossessed with the belief that federation was neither probable nor desirable, it was not astonishing that he suspected everybody who so much as tolerated the idea of federation as intent on some sinister design. Mr. Molteno, as we know, was no Richelieu; still less was he a Talleyrand. A few minutes' conversation with him, however, convinced Mr. Froude that he harboured desperate schemes:

A light broke upon me. Mr. Molteno wished for confederation, but a confederation on his own terms. He wished us to have the odium and trouble of forcing the Free States back under the British flag, while he himself affected to regret it. When the work was done, he would then offer to take them in under the Constitution. A Dominion formed in this way would simply be a Dutch State reconstituted, filled with a determined and just resentment against the English Government. South Africa on such terms would not be worth our possessing. If this was Mr. Molteno's purpose, it was neither fair nor tolerable. I hinted my suspicions to him. He did not admit that I was right, but he did not deny it. He simply

[1] 'Two Lectures on South Africa,' p. 73. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

said that he had made up his mind to have nothing to do with the Conference, and that the question could not be reopened. I asked him if he would lay what I had said before the Parliament. He said there was no occasion for it.[1]

In the whole history of negotiations it will be difficult to find a parallel for such a choice as Mr. Froude's. Here was a task of extreme delicacy, the success of which depended upon the recommendation of a certain scheme to a responsible Ministry in the first glow of its enjoyment of responsibility. The emissary entrusted with its achievement did not believe that the scheme was either possible or politic, and had a profound distrust of responsible government. 'I do not blame them' (the Cape Ministers); 'I blame the system. I believe responsible government to be thoroughly unsuited to the circumstances of South Africa. They had thought so themselves; but having got it, they naturally insisted upon their rights.'[2] Send a brewer to advocate Prohibition, send a Bishop to preach Disestablishment, send a President of the Cobden Club to inculcate the blessings of Fair Trade, but do not commission distinguished men of letters to advocate a policy which they but partially understand, and with which they fundamentally disagree.

[1] 'Two Lectures on South Africa,' p. 75. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

CHAPTER IV

SIR BARTLE FRERE

BETWEEN the departure of Mr. Froude and the arrival of Sir Bartle Frere, as successor to Sir Henry Barkly, the negotiations with regard to confederation were suspended. It is true that a Conference of an informal character was held at the Colonial Office on October 26, 1876. It consisted of a deputation of gentlemen interested in South African affairs of the one part, and the Colonial Secretary of the other. As, however, the President of the Orange Free State and Mr. Molteno, the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, considered themselves bound by the resolutions of their respective Parliaments not to take part in any formal Conference, the proceedings derive their sole importance from the opinions expressed in course of them. An address in favour of confederation was presented to Lord Carnarvon, signed by the leading merchants connected with South Africa, a deputation whose interests, said Mr. Paterson, who spoke for it, were only to be expressed by 'the large figure of millions.'

Further, Theophilus Shepstone had already been appointed with very large powers to deal with the question of the Transvaal, and it is interesting and important to note what Mr. Paterson thought of the fact:

> 'If there is to be a taking over of the Transvaal, the just susceptibility of the people there should be fairly and fully consulted, and if they are to be put under one supreme legislature in South Africa by their own consent, there should still be left to them the fullest government in the administration of local affairs.'

Lord Carnarvon's reply fairly stated the views of the Imperial Government with regard to the Transvaal. It is important that these views should be placed on record in the face of the very persistent misrepresentations which were made between the first annexation and the retrocession. Those who opposed the original absorption of the Republic, and those who advocated the restoration of its independence, insisted that Lord Carnarvon's policy, as executed by Theophilus Shepstone, was based upon a complete misapprehension of the feelings and wishes of the Dutch inhabitants. Nothing was so common in the post-retrocessional debates in Parliament than the imputation to Lord Carnarvon of a belief that annexation was favoured by a majority of the Transvaalers. There is no evidence whatever of such a misapprehension, nor was it ever encouraged by Shepstone. Mr. Rider Haggard, in a work published in 1882 and republished in part in 1897, says distinctly[1] that if those who made these statements

had taken the trouble to refer to Sir Theophilus Shepstone's despatches, they would have found that the ground on which the Transvaal was annexed was, not because the majority of the inhabitants wished for it, but because the State was drifting into anarchy, was bankrupt, and was about to be destroyed by native tribes. They would further have found that Sir Theophilus Shepstone never represented that the majority of the Boers were in favour of annexation. What he did say was that most thinking men in the country saw no other way out of the difficulty; but what proportion of the Boers can be called thinking men? He also said . . . that petitions signed by 2,500 people, representing every class of the community, out of a total adult male population of 8,000, had been presented to the Government of the Republic, setting forth its difficulties and dangers, and praying it 'to treat with me for their amelioration or removal.' He also stated, and with perfect truth, that many more would have signed had it not been for the terrorism that was exercised, and that all the towns and villages in the country desired the change, which was a patent fact.

Mr. Haggard, it will be remembered, was on Sir Theophilus Shepstone's staff. Months, however, before annexation was effected Lord Carnarvon, in replying[2] to the Paterson deputation, showed that he was under no illusion as to Boer opinion:

A good deal has been said with regard to the present position of the Transvaal Republic. Statements have reached me, and, I have no doubt,

[1] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 58.

[2] Blue-book, C. 1732.

others in this room, of a disposition on the part of many in the Transvaal to join our English colonists in some closer bond of connection. It has, indeed, been so said by one of the speakers to-day, and I am quite aware that within the Transvaal there are many persons who are very favourable to such a union. Probably the vast majority of the English residents there would eagerly welcome some such change. I believe that a large proportion of the Dutch population also would recognise in such a union a greater security for life and property and for all those elements of sound government which every young community must naturally desire to obtain. No doubt there are inducements to the Dutch populations of the Transvaal on the one hand to enter into closer bonds of alliance with the Dutch in Cape Colony and in Natal, just as there must be a readiness on the part of the Dutch population in our English colonies to enter into closer union with the Dutch population of the Transvaal; and therefore I see no reason against the idea that such a union may be practicable and desirable, and may be entered into with the hearty concurrence of all, or all the principal parties concerned and interested in such a change. At the same time, I am sure you will feel that no precipitate action should be taken by Her Majesty's Government in this matter, and I have great confidence in the wisdom and evenly-balanced mind of Sir Theophilus Shepstone. I have also great confidence in the measures he will take, and in the support he will receive from all the constituted authorities, both from the Imperial Legislature and the Governments of Natal and the Cape. At such a moment as the present, union, as it has been truly said, is strength, and not only among the European communities of South Africa, but union as between them and the Imperial Government at home. It is not a time for dissensions; we ought all to set aside all differences, and to feel that there is one common interest in South Africa which both the Imperial Government and the Governments of the colonies can best carry out by joint and hearty action.

And he added, with regard to the Bill which he was submitting to Parliament, this solemn and specific statement:

I have explained[1] that it will be an entirely permissive measure, and that it will furnish an outline, leaving it to local knowledge and experience to fill in the details as far as possible. I will only add one other remark in reference to an observation which has been made in this room, and it is this: that whilst I desire to see the Central Government and Parliament of the South African Confederation as strong as possible, and free from any of those checks and thwarting influence to which it might be exposed from rival and co-ordinate and antagonistic bodies—whilst I desire to see this on the one hand, I also desire to see preserved as far as possible, in the several States which may become members of the Confederation, their individuality of character and their old traditions and customs, and to give them as large a share as possible of power and control in the administration and in the expenditure of money. I do not mean to say that there may not be difficulties in adjusting the rival claims of two such bodies as a central body and a provincial body. That, no doubt, was one of the great difficulties with which we had to deal in Canada years ago. But, taking all the circumstances and all the conditions into consideration, I think myself that the conditions are more favourable in South Africa than they were in Canada. And I can see

[1] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 14.

for myself no insurmountable difficulty in striking a very fair balance, and in arriving at a settlement equitable and acceptable to all parties.

Where he was mistaken is shown in the concluding sentence of this passage. It was not astonishing that a Minister, surveying the situation at a distance of 6,000 miles, should come to the conclusion, not only that federation was the best thing for South Africa, but that every intelligent man in South Africa saw this as clearly as himself. The merchants who waited upon him, and were in daily touch with South Africa, realized as fully as the Colonial Secretary that in union alone was to be found the salvation of such territories as lay within the British sphere of influence. Nothing, however, was further from the truth than the belief that this view was held generally by South African politicians. None, indeed, except (perhaps) President Brand of the Orange Free State, was capable of taking a comprehensive view of the situation of South Africa. The Transvaal was so torn with internal dissensions that few, if any, so much as considered how they might preserve their independence. True, the President, Mr. Burgers, was a man of great ambition, and, in education and intelligence, head and shoulders above the Boers he ruled. Like so many of the leading men in the Republics, he was a native of Cape Colony. He spent the earlier part of his life, like David, in herding sheep. He then became a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and was noted far and wide for his eloquence amongst a people with whom the power of forcible and picturesque expression is by no means rare. His religious views were not such as we should have regarded as liberal; but, such as they were, they were far too broad for the Doppers—the extreme Puritan party of which Paul Kruger was the most conspicuous member—so he quitted the ministry for politics. His heterodoxy damned him in the new career as in the old. Mr. Haggard summarises a curious article from *Die Patriot*,[1] published at the very crisis of his fortune:

[1] *Die Patriot* was a Dutch paper published in Cape Colony. From the very beginning of our troubles with the Transvaal to their climax in 1899, it will be found, as I shall abundantly show, that all, or nearly all, the incitements to rebellion and opposition to Great Britain emanated either from Cape Colony or from the Orange Free State.

After drawing a very vivid picture (says Mr. Haggard)[1] of the wretched condition of the country as compared to what it was when the Kaffirs had a 'proper respect' for the Boers before Burgers came into power, the article proceeds to give the cause of this state of affairs : 'God's word gives us the solution. Look at Israel. While the people have a godly King everything is prosperous, but under a godless Prince the land retrogrades and the whole of the people must suffer. Read Leviticus, chapter xxvi., with attention. In the day of the Voortrekkers a handful of men chased a thousand Kaffirs and made them run ; so also in the Free State War (Deut. xxxii. 30 ; Jos. xxiii. 10 ; Lev. xxvi. 8) ; but mark now when Burgers became President: he knows no Sabbath ; he rides through the land in and out of town on Sunday ; he knows not the church and God's service (Lev. xxvi. 2, 3), to the scandal of pious people. And he formerly was a priest, too. And what is the consequence? No harvest (Lev. xxvi. 16); an army of 6,000 men runs because one man falls (Lev. xxvi. 17, etc.). What is now the remedy?' The remedy proves to be Paul Kruger, 'because there is no other candidate, because our Lord clearly points him to be the man. For why is there no other candidate? Who arranges it this way?' Then follows a rather odd argument in favour of Paul's election: 'Because he himself, Paul Kruger, acknowledges in his own reply that he is incompetent, but that all his ability is from our Lord. Because he is a warrior. Because he is a Boer.' Then Paul Kruger, the warrior and the Boer, is compared to Joan of Arc—'a simple Boer girl who came from behind the sheep.' The burghers of the Transvaal are exhorted to acknowledge the hand of the Lord and elect Paul Kruger, or to look for still heavier punishment (Lev. xxvi. 18 *et seq.*). Next *Die Patriot* proceeds to give a bit of advice to 'our candidate Paul Kruger.' He is to deliver the land from the Kaffirs : 'The Lord has given you the heart of a warrior ; arise and drive them.' A bit of advice quite suited to his well-known character. But this chosen vessel was not to get all the loaves and fishes ; on the contrary, as soon as he had fulfilled his mission of driving the Kaffirs, he was to hand over his office to a 'good' President. The article ends thus : 'If the Lord wills to use you now, to deliver this land from its enemies, and a day of peace and prosperity arises again, and you see that you are not exactly the statesman to further govern the Republic, then it will be your greatest honour to say, Citizens, I have delivered you from the enemy : I am no statesman, but now you have peace and time to choose and elect a good President.'

The conditions of the Transvaal could not be more concisely stated than they are by Mr. Rider Haggard, whom I quote because he was one of the very few eye-witnesses of the situation, before Sir Theophilus Shepstone proceeded to proclaim the Queen :

Under the pressure of all these troubles, the Boers themselves split up into factions, as they are always ready to do. The Dopper party declared that they had had enough progress, and proposed the extremely Conservative Paul Kruger as President, Burgers' time having nearly expired. Paul Kruger accepted the candidature, although he had previously promised his support to Burgers, and distrust of each other was added to the other difficulties in the executive, the Transvaal becoming a

[1] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 77.

house very much divided against itself. Natives, Doppers, progressionists, officials, English, were all pulling different ways, and each striving for his own advantage. Anything more hopeless than the position of the country on January 1, 1877, it is impossible to conceive. Enemies surrounded it; on every border there was the prospect of a serious war. In the Exchequer there was nothing but piles of overdue bills. The President was helpless and mistrustful of his officers, and the officers were caballing against the President. All the ordinary functions of government had ceased, and trade was paralyzed. Now and then wild proposals were made to relieve the State of its burdens, some of which partook of the nature of repudiation, but these were the exception; the majority of the inhabitants, who would neither fight nor pay taxes, sat still and awaited the catastrophe, utterly careless of all consequences.[1]

Such was the pass at which the Transvaal had arrived; nor, from the point of view of federation, was the prospect in Cape Colony and Natal more hopeful. Mr. Froude, as we have seen, had found a disposition on the part of the new-made responsible Ministry to take a very independent view of its relations with the Imperial Government; his unfortunate conduct of his very delicate mission had further stiffened the necks of Mr. Molteno and his colleagues, and when Sir Bartle Frere arrived on the scene these legislators had reached a point of intolerance which practically amounted to insubordination.

Aristotle would have been grieved with the condition of South Africa. Everywhere he would have found extremes; everywhere he would have looked in vain for the golden mean. If Cape Colony had so much responsible government that it was virtually irreponsible, Natal, which was a Crown colony, was irresponsible because it had no responsibility at all. As matter of fact, the jealousies of these two British colonies, even when Natal was levelled up to the same standard of constitutional government as the Cape, contributed in no small degree to the troubles in which South Africa had been involved. Although, to an onlooker, the common interests of these communities outweigh all other considerations, for those on the spot the local interest overshadows everything. Had the British element in both colonies worked harmoniously for the strengthening of the British position in South Africa, many of the difficulties with natives, together with the bitter struggle with the Dutch, might have been avoided. It required the sobering influence

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

of a mortal danger to bring Natal and the Cape into something like unity of feeling and action, and yet when I was in South Africa in the latter half of 1900, I found that, in the shadow of the common peril, the two Governments were ready as ever to fly at each other's throats, and that over the petty ins and outs of railway administration Cape Colony, with the larger population and the older traditions, looked with disdain upon the pert presumption of Natal; Natal, with adequate but not excessive justification, retorted upon her with reminders of the disloyalty and the disaffection which have ever tainted her relations with the mother-country.

If such survivals of feeling can co-exist with the averting of what might have been an irreparable disaster, it may easily be imagined that, twenty-five years ago, when the menace to British supremacy was real but to a few far-sighted men, there was little disposition to co-operate for common ends at individual cost. When Sir Bartle Frere visited Natal some eighteen months after his arrival in Cape Colony, he was shocked by the thoughtlessness of public opinion. On this score listen to his biographer, Mr. Martineau:[1]

The Government, not being dependent on a majority of the legislature, was subject to little criticism, and underwent little change in its composition and traditions. The colony had been till lately isolated from any other, and there had been little thought of concerted action with the Cape. With one exception, Frere found no one from whom he could get much help. Most of the local officials had strong prejudices against the Transvaal Boers, against Dutchmen in general, against the Cape Colony, its ways and its Ministers, against advocates of responsible government, against military men, and against all non-officials and outsiders. Frere himself, in one of those confidential letters to Mr. R. W. Herbert, to whom he could always open his own mind with a certainty of eliciting a sympathetic response, wrote:[2]

'No country farmer with a bunch of gold seals dangling from his watch-pocket, and a well-filled purse and pocket-book equally manifest under the broadcloth of his garments, dozing among thieves in a Whitechapel "boozing-den," had ever a greater or more undeserved escape than this colony has had from its Zulu neighbours. I was puzzled at first why the Zulus had left it alone so long, but I found that they had been thoroughly beaten when the Boers, taking Panda's side, set him on the throne *vice* his brother Dingaun, defeated and killed in 1840. The Boers were aggressive, the Englishmen not, and were inclined to help the Zulus against the Boers. I have been shocked to find how very close to the wind the predecessors of the present Government here have sailed

[1] 'The Transvaal Trouble,' p. 75. [2] January 12, 1879.

in supporting the Zulus against Boer aggression. Mr. John Dunn, still a salaried official of this Government, thinking himself bound to explain his own share in supplying rifles to the Zulus in consequence of the revelation in a late trial of a Durban gun-runner, avows that he did so with the knowledge, if not the consent, and at the suggestion of—(naming a high colonial official) in Natal. —— denies this, and shows the untruth of much that Dunn says. But there can be no doubt that Natal sympathy was strongly with the Zulus as against the Boers, and, what is worse, is so still. I cannot tell you what uphill work it is contending one day with some crotchet or difficulty raised by Colenso, another with every form of selfish and narrow-minded difficulty. Natal has nothing to do with the Transvaal or Imperial interests in South Africa. Everything of this kind ought to be the care of the home Government. . . . Officers are well aware of this. . . . I had no idea till I came here how entirely the colonists were kept from any share in, or knowledge of, many of the most important branches of administration, notably of all that relates to native affairs.'

In the same letter there occurs a passage which disposes of the imputation freely levelled at Sir Bartle by Mr. Gladstone and others, that his Indian experiences made him contemptuous of, and hostile to, free forms of constitutional government. Cape Colony, as we know, enjoyed responsible government; Natal had just been 'reconstituted' by Lord (then Sir Garnet) Wolseley. This is how Frere speaks of it:

I need not describe it (that is, the Constitution), for you know the hybrid affair which here, as at Kimberley, lets in just enough of independence to checkmate the best of despots, but not enough to make the independents feel responsible for any part of the mischief they may do. The strange thing is that not one of the officials I have yet met sees, or, if he sees, likes to acknowledge, the obvious reason of the failure of the Constitution to give reasonable satisfaction to any one. All admit it was bad and unworkable when Sir Garnet Wolseley came here, and is worse now. I have seen no one who thinks it possible to go on with it as it is after the term of its trial is over one or two years hence. Few even of the most determined officials hint at the possibility of a change in the direction of more absolute autocracy. All reasonable, practical men scout such an idea; but many say, in a kind of despair, they fear the colony is not fit for responsible government. This, I believe, is a great mistake. I have not seen as much of the non-officials here as I should like, but I feel quite confident that you have here all the elements of a good, responsible government if you exclude those subjects which the South African Act reserves to the union or to Her Majesty's Government. But whatever is done, you will have to change the present system of managing native affairs.

From all this, it can be gathered how optimistic Lord Carnarvon was when he stated that the conditions of federation in South Africa were more favourable than those which preceded the establishment of the Dominion in

Canada. As matter of fact, no doubt, the circumstances of South Africa demanded the remedy of federation more urgently than the circumstances of Canada; but, unfortunately, the bodies politic in South Africa were so hopelessly disorganized that they failed to understand the gravity of their condition and the imperative necessity of applying the sole remedy.

Let me briefly review the situation as it had evolved itself just before Sir Bartle Frere's arrival. Cape Colony, in the new enjoyment of an independence to which it seemed to recognise no reasonable limits, had been inspired with jealousy of the Imperial factor by the humours of Mr. Froude. The Dutch colonists, who had been deliberately encouraged by that eminent historian to regard Lord Carnarvon's proposal as a more or less dignified cover for the release of Great Britain from her Imperial responsibilities, began to think that the hour for a united South Africa had come. They were divided in opinion as to whether federation would block or smooth the way towards that 'dim and distant' goal they had in view. One thing, however, was apparent to them all, and that was, the maintenance at any and every cost of the essential Dutchness of the Transvaal. A Dutch State within the Federal Union might act as a leaven to the mass, but a distinctly English addition would arrest for ever the growth of the movement in favour of a Dutch Pan-Africa. This idea was soon to pass into practice. Meanwhile the Transvaal was a house hopelessly divided against itself. Its immediate difficulties were so grievous and so engrossing that they shut out the possibilities then engaging the attention of the Dutch in Cape Colony. Self-preservation is a motive which necessarily takes precedence of national and racial ambition. Those to whom the day's existence is a matter of doubt naturally take little thought of the morrow; and in the Transvaal the day's existence was threatened both from within and without, at the time when Sir Bartle Frere was considering Lord Carnarvon's offer of the high commissionership. Natal, as we have seen, had no higher aspiration than that of spoking the wheel of Cape Colony, and of encouraging the Zulus to harry the Boers upon their frontier. There was only one province in South

Africa which was in the happy position, not only of knowing what it wanted, but of being conscious that, as it wanted nothing but to be left alone, it was assured of its ambition. The Orange Free State was well governed, and within its boundaries Dutch and British had fallen into line as nowhere else. President Brand, who still ranks as the most capable statesman South Africa has produced, saw that his Republic, in its position of 'greater freedom and less responsibility,' must inevitably profit by every discovery which increased the wealth of his neighbours on either side. Under a scheme of confederation such as was originally proposed, the Orange Free State would have occupied in the South African Dominion a position of unique and commanding influence. The fact that it had entered voluntarily into an intimate union with the British colonies would have constituted the strongest possible guarantee that there would be no encroachment upon its independence. Sooner or later the capital of the Federal Union must have been transferred, as it may still have to be transferred, to Bloemfontein. The experience, the solidarity, and the prestige of the Orange Free State, must, despite its scantier population and its inferior wealth, in the long-run have made it the hub of the new Dominion. The Transvaal and Cape Colony Dutch would have regarded Brand as their leader and spokesman in the Federal Parliament, and the English of the colony and of the Transvaal, influenced by the great respect with which their fellow-countrymen of the Orange Free State looked upon the President, would have accepted his pre-eminence with the less reluctance, for the reason that they had none to pit against him. Unfortunately, influences external to Brand's own state prevented him from playing the part for which he seemed predestined; and South Africa had, as it were, to be thrown into the melting-pot before there could be any fusion of the component elements.

Such were the general conditions when Sir Bartle Frere was approached by Lord Carnarvon with a view to his acceptance of the High Commissionership, with larger power and a freer hand than had been enjoyed by any of his predecessors. At this time Sir Bartle had passed his sixtieth year. He had entered the Bombay Civil Service at nineteen,

and had served his country with great distinction through thirty-three years of the most critical period in the history of British India. He had been Resident at, and Commissioner of, Sattara from 1847 to 1850; Commissioner in Sind from 1851 to 1859—a period which covers the origin, development, and close of the great cataclysm of the Mutiny; member of the Supreme Council of Calcutta from 1860 to 1862; after a brilliant five years spent in governing Bombay, he returned to England in 1867, and became a member of the Council of India; five years later he was specially employed on a mission for the suppression of the slave trade on the east coast of Africa; in 1876 he was selected to accompany the King (then Prince of Wales) on his memorable visit to India. Amongst the many great impertinences which make up the bulk of the two volumes which Mr. P. A. Molteno has devoted to the undistinguished career of his very commonplace father, the introduction of Sir Bartle's name is not the least amusing:

Precedent as well as convenience pointed to a man of some administrative experience being appointed to the office of High Commissioner, and by this consideration the ranks of purely military candidates were closed to Lord Carnarvon. Another source, however, was available. The necessity of ruling a subject people by despotic methods had produced in India a race of officials unused to the ways of freedom and the liberty of representative institutions, to whom obedience on the part of the people over whom they ruled was necessarily one of the highest virtues. The history of the Roman Empire has shown how the despotic government of subject races by a free people reacted on the latter, and gradually ate into their free institutions until it eventually destroyed them. There is a similar tendency in the vast bureaucratic system of India to produce men who are ready to undervalue the free constitution we enjoy. It was to this school of despotism that Lord Carnarvon now turned for an instrument to override the expressed wishes of the Cape Colony, the Free State, and the Transvaal—practically the whole of South Africa to which any free choice was possible, for Natal and Griqualand West were Crown colonies. Sir Bartle Frere had just acted as dragoman to the Prince of Wales on his tour through India, and had been rewarded with a baronetcy and a G.C.B. He was now free for any great work which might satisfy his ambition, bring him further opportunities of giving scope to his active powers of mind, and enable him to put into effect those Jingo tendencies which were so strong in him. Rumour in the mouth of his friends assigned him all offices; at one time he was to be the new Governor-General of India; at another he was to be the Governor of Bulgaria under English administration; then he was to return to Bombay and to serve another term as Governor in succession to Sir Philip Wodehouse; again, he was to be the despot chosen to carry out his suggestions of a dictatorship for New Zealand. He was invited by the Khedive to become his Railway Minister; he was consulted by the Government on Indian,

Egyptian, and East African affairs; his advice was solicited on the Eastern Question. Whether any man was equal to advise on and be entrusted with all these high matters is uncertain, and we need not stop to inquire, as he was not called upon to actively discharge all these offices; but it is certain that he very egregiously failed in that office to which he was actually called. There was a concensus of opinion among his admirers that such great abilities should not long remain unutilized by the country. Lord Carnarvon had used the prestige of a successful warrior,[1] combined with the despotic tendencies of a military ruler, to deprive Natal of its free constitution. He did not search in vain among the ranks of Indian bureaucrats for a man ready to 'dictate' his policy and to crush the opposition of all local men. Here was the very man of whom Lord Carnarvon was in search. Had not the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield already set the seal of their approval upon him? Had not Lord Salisbury already accepted his advice in regard to India? And it is curious to remark that the Ministry who had followed his advice in India were sending him to Africa, thus placing him in a position to control the policy of the Empire in two continents.[2]

I need scarce say that I cite these puerilities, not because they mean anything, but simply because they show the spirit in which Sir Bartle Frere's appointment was received by the dominant faction at the Cape. Another dazzling extract from Mr. Molteno, and I part with him for ever:[3]

Before he left England to take up his new duties, Sir Bartle Frere was entertained at a great banquet in London at which Lord Salisbury and many distinguished men were present. It is curious to observe in connection with Sir Bartle Frere how continually we are reminded of Rome. In the speech made by Lord Carnarvon on this occasion he compared Sir Bartle Frere's departure to that of a Proconsul proceeding to take possession of his province; but we are not carried back to the best days of Rome, when its free institutions were sound, but to the period when the task of governing the world was overtaxing the energies and the probity of the Senate, and making a Cæsar a fatal but an inevitable necessity. Sir Bartle Frere . . . compared himself at Bombay to a Cæsar. At last his time had come: he was to be the Cæsar of South Africa. But Cæsar owed his success to the conditions of Rome at that time. The solution of Indian rule may be autocracy; the solution of colonial self-government was further self-government. The history of Cæsar and of Roman Imperialism, with all its unsurpassed greatness of the master worker, with all the historical necessity of the work, is in truth a sharper censure of modern autocracy than could be written by the hand of man. . . . Cæsarism, where it appears under other conditions of development, is at once a caricature and a usurpation. We shall see how true was this of Sir Bartle Frere's Cæsarism in South Africa.

Mr. Molteno's criticisms deserve no notice on their merits; but as, thanks chiefly to Mr. Gladstone's unprovoked

[1] Lord Wolseley. [2] 'Life and Times of Sir J. C. Molteno,' ii. 158.
[3] It is quite clear that Mr. Molteno had not, when he made this quotation from Mommsen, the slightest idea of the modern instance which the historian, after his fashion, was thus obliquely censuring.

attacks upon Sir Bartle Frere in the course of his Midlothian campaign, this belief as to the autocratic views of Sir Bartle Frere has found a place in the Liberal Creed, it may be as well to dispose of the fallacy once and for all. The chief reference to Sir Bartle is in the authorized version of the Midlothian speeches.[1] Thus, then, after a bitter denunciation of the Afghan War, Mr. Gladstone, 'the greatest statesman that ever lived':

> There are two gentlemen of distinguished names who supported an Indian policy of advance in Afghanistan. Who are they? Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir Bartle Frere. Those are the two great authorities. Sir Henry Rawlinson was, I believe, a distinguished officer. He is a scientific man, a man of high character and great ability. Sir Bartle Frere, except that I believe he was entirely a civilian, deserves the ascription to him of all those qualities in the highest degree; but neither the one nor the other gentleman has ever been in a position of responsibility. Neither one nor the other has ever imbibed from actual acquaintance with British institutions the spirit by which British Government ought to be regulated and controlled. That they are men of benevolence I do not doubt, but I am afraid they are gentlemen who are apt in giving scope to their benevolent motives, to take into their own hands the choice of means in a manner those who are conversant with free government and with a responsible government never dream of. Sir Bartle Frere's mode of action at the Cape of Good Hope does not tend to accredit his advice in Afghanistan now.

Allowing for the difference of style and treatment between the artist and the draughtsman of election squibs, Mr. Gladstone's portrait of Sir Bartle Frere is practically identical with Mr. Molteno's. The idea which it is sought to convey in both is that a statesman trained in the bureaucratic school of India is not only unfitted to rule under a system of constitutional government, but is naturally adverse to free institutions. Now, the best answer to this insinuation, which is found permeating pro-Boer literature down to the present day, is an extract from a speech delivered at a dinner by Sir Bartle Frere on June 11, 1879. The date is important, partly because the speech was delivered four months before Mr. Gladstone's attack, and long after Sir Bartle Frere had been in sharp conflict with the Cape Government over this very question of responsibility. The occasion of the dinner was Sir Bartle's return to the capital after an absence of

[1] 'Mr. Gladstone's Political Speeches in Scotland, November and December, 1879, Revised by the Author' (London, Ridgeway, 1879), p. 205.

nine months' duration in Natal, the Transvaal, and Griqualand West. The chair, it may be noted, was occupied by a gentleman with the characteristically Dutch name of De Smidt. Sir Bartle, at the close of an interesting speech, spoke as follows:

I have only one word more to say. I have been warned by friendly critics—not precisely by my responsible advisers, but by very friendly critics—that a Governor of this colony has no opinions, or ought to have no opinions, of his own, only those of his Ministers, in any matter that relates to the Cape Colony. I accept as it is expressed, this constitutional doctrine, and I will not trouble you with anything specially relating to the Cape Colony; but, gentlemen, among the remedies prescribed for the maladies which afflict us, there is one which is very frequently prescribed, and that is, that all this mischief is due to responsible government, and that the sooner you throw off responsible government, and revert to some more autocratic form of administration, the better it will be for you. This advice has been given you by critics and men of very great weight in forming opinion at home; but I feel convinced that my countrymen will never listen to them. I think it is firmly resolved that there shall be no going back in this matter; and these critics will come round sooner or later to my own opinion, that it is to responsible government that your safety at this moment is mainly due; that it is to responsible government you must look for the means for the development of South Africa; and that it is by extending such government as you yourselves possess to other parts of the country that you may best join with them in promoting a united South Africa. Therefore, I say, let there be no going back in the matter of responsible government.[1]

I have anticipated somewhat because, to understand the difficulties which beset Sir Bartle Frere, one must know something of the atmosphere of jealousy and suspicion into which he entered upon his appointment. Mr. Froude had greatly worsened matters, and the choice of a very distinguished Indian servant no doubt accentuated Mr. Molteno's suspicion that Lord Carnarvon meant to force the pace. There is, however, no excuse for the legend which even now receives some credence, that the annexation of the Transvaal

[1] A few sentences from the speech with which Mr. De Smidt acknowledged the toast of 'The Chairman': 'His Excellency had said somewhat about his being an old colonist; he was perhaps in years the oldest person there present. He had seen different phases of affairs in the colony; and he might say that the native policy of Sir Bartle Frere would be beneficial, not only to the European races in South Africa, but also to the natives themselves. The only way to civilize them was to bring them under the rule of Her Majesty, and that was the best rule under which any people lived on earth. He himself had experience of wars with the natives, as far back as 1819, and under Sir Benjamin Durban in 1835; and the policy then was the same as the policy of Sir Bartle Frere, and if that policy had been carried out, it would have been the saving of many valuable lives and of much treasure.'

was part of a policy concocted by the Colonial Secretary and 'the prancing Proconsul' from India. Among the few things which are absolutely certain in this troublesome world is the fact that an event which occurred on Thursday cannot possibly have been caused by an event which happened the next day. The date of the letter in which Lord Carnarvon mooted to Sir Bartle Frere the proposal that he should succeed Sir Henry Barkly was October 13, 1876, and it was not until March 9 of the following year that Sir Bartle Frere set sail in the *Balmoral* for Cape Town, where he arrived on March 31. It was on December 20, 1876, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone wrote to President Burgers, informing him of a visit to the Transvaal which he had undertaken on instructions from Lord Carnarvon. On April 9, when Sir Bartle Frere had been less than ten days in Cape Town—a period too short to admit of communication with Pretoria—Sir Theophilus Shepstone wrote to President Burgers, announcing his intention to annex the country, and adding: 'I have more than once assured your Honour that if I could think of any other plan by which the independence of the State could be maintained by its own internal resources, I would most certainly not conceal that plan from you.'

It must not, however, be assumed that Sir Bartle disapproved of the action of Sir Theophilus Shepstone. Mr. Martineau, Frere's biographer, puts the question beyond all doubt:[1]

Frere had landed at Cape Town on March the 31st. On the morning of April 16th Mr. R. W. Murray, jun., the editor of the *Cape Times*, hurried up to Government House and showed him a telegraphic press message he had just received from Kimberley[2] that the proclamation of annexation of the Transvaal had been issued on the 12th. 'Good heavens!' was Frere's exclamation, 'what will they say in England?' Details were slow in coming, and it was not until the 30th, eighteen days after its issue, that Frere received an official copy of the proclamation. Though there are no written words of Frere's to that effect, there is no

[1] 'The Transvaal Troubles,' p. 18.

[2] The telegraph in those days was completed only as far as Kimberley, and the distance of 270 miles between Kimberley and Pretoria occupied about four days to cover by the mail. The horses were not stabled, but grazed by contract with farmers on the line of road; and at the end of each stage the coach had to wait sometimes for hours before fresh horses were caught.

doubt that he inclined to the opinion that Shepstone's proclamation was premature. He had no choice, however, but to accept the act as accomplished, and, as was his wont, he was quite prepared to believe that Shepstone, the officer on the spot, and in possession of the fullest and latest information, might have acted for the best. On the 4th, twelve days before the news came, he had written to Lord Carnarvon: 'It seems to me that, as matters now stand, criticism as to what Shepstone is doing is as misplaced as suggestions how to hold his paddle would be to a man shooting a rapid. Our best course is cordially to support him in all reasonable ways, as long as he appears to be doing his best to carry out our views and instructions.

In an article published in the *Nineteenth Century* for February, 1881, Sir Bartle Frere said:

> 'In judging of the annexation of the Transvaal, I would wish it to be borne in mind that it was an act which in no way originated with me, over which I had no control, and with which I was only subsequently incidentally connected. The annexation took place on the 11th of April, several days before my arrival at the Cape on the 31st of March could be known to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, as the telegraph-line did not then exist, and letters took over three weeks from Cape Town to Pretoria. . . . It was a great question then as now whether the annexation was justifiable.'

It would be wrong to conclude from this and other similar passages to be found in Frere's published articles and private letters that he disapproved of the event. He was the last man in the world to have lent the sanction of his name and his authority to the prosecution of a policy which his moral judgment condemned. He was, however, at that particular time defending himself against the charges brought against him by Mr. Gladstone and others of being the instigator of a 'forward' policy both in India and in Africa. The annexation of the Transvaal was cited to discredit the advice he was supposed to have tendered with regard to the North-western Frontier; but he was quite entitled to say, as he did, that the annexation of the Transvaal was not due to his advice and was not part of his policy. As matter of fact, when Lord Carnarvon first broached to him the subject of the High Commissionership, the Colonial Secretary was already committed to proceedings which, in his judgment, would eventuate in the absorption of the Transvaal Republic. This is clearly indicated in the letter

of invitation addressed to Sir Bartle Frere of October 13, 1876. Although there is no extant memorandum of Frere's, it is impossible to doubt that the subject of the relations of the Empire to the Transvaal was frequently discussed between the two statesmen in the course of the many visits which Sir Bartle paid to Highclere before he sailed for the Cape.

But, as I have said, no responsibility attaches to Frere for either the policy of annexation or the method of its execution. As a matter of fact, Sir Bartle was known to object to the use of the word 'annexation,' and would have preferred the word 'union' or 'incorporation,' or, indeed, any phrase which would have implied voluntary co-operation on the part of the Boers, before one savouring of autocratic dictation.

The material point is one of, not form, but substance; and with regard to this there can be no doubt that Frere realized that absorption was the only possible alternative to a state of anarchy, which would have been fatal to the Transvaalers and disastrous to South Africa. The fundamental difficulty experienced by the non-British section of the inhabitants of South Africa has been due to their entire lack of administrative capacity. The art of governing is not given to all races any more than it is to all classes and to all individuals; and the fact, as it seems to me, has been curiously overlooked by inquirers into the causes of our perennial troubles in South Africa. And yet there is nothing astonishing in the phenomenon. When we talk of a British colony, we mean the results of an adventure on the part of certain of the race who have carried with them most of the characteristics of the parent stock. In time, no doubt, the offshoot, in the process of adapting itself to its new environment — geographical, climatic, and political — undergoes many modifications, and ultimately becomes a different species, or, it may be, even a different genus. But the old vital principles, though changed in form and in application, are not destroyed, so that in America, whether it be in the United States or in the Dominion, the old English capacity for self-government asserts itself after the old fashion, though in modified forms. This truism applies equally to all the

different colonies of the great island continent of Australia. New Zealand, which has had other problems to solve than those which have confronted its near neighbour, only differs superficially in the political institutions it has evolved; and between none of them—North America, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand—and the mother-country is there more political difference than can be accounted for by the requirements of environment. In our loose employment of political terminology we have been wont to talk of Cape Colony as if it were a British colony in the same sense in which the expression was applicable to the North American colonies as they were, and to Australia and New Zealand as they are. As matter of fact, while in other colonies there have been substantial identity and formal difference, in South Airica we found, or we established, a formal identity which has concealed many fundamental differences. In the first place, the original white inhabitants of South Africa were not, in any true sense, colonists at all. Until the very eve of our first occupation of the Cape, they were the tolerated vassals of a great monopoly. In 1799 the so-called 'free burghers' set forth their grievances in a petition to the directors of the Dutch East India Company. Amongst their requests was one which reveals the enormous ignorance of the said 'free burghers' of even the most elementary forms of self-government known to Anglo-Saxons. They beg, for instance,

> that authentic copies of the particular placaats and ordinances governing the Cape should be furnished for the behoof of the colony; or, which they preferred, that a printing-press should be established and a printer be appointed, so as to enable all members of the community to obtain copies of the laws in force, that they might not longer be subject to the arbitrary exactions of Fiscals and Landdrosts in the extension and limitation of fines and penalties.[1]

And this petition was addressed by men of European origin to the Government of their allegiance about the very time that the North American colonies were proclaiming their independence! It was referred by the directors to their legal representative in the Cape Government, the Fiscal, and his report upon it, always bearing in mind that it was drawn up only a few years before our first occupation of the

[1] Worsfold, 'South Africa' ('The Temple Primers'), p. 24.

country, furnishes an amusing comment upon the charge that we ruthlessly severed the binding ties of affection which linked the 'free burghers' to the Netherlands.

It would be indeed (the Fiscal says) a serious error if a comparison were attempted to be instituted between the inhabitants of a colony situated as this is, and the privileged free citizens of our great towns in the United Provinces. It would be mere deception to argue any equality of rights between them. Were it necessary, it would be easy to exhibit the origin of the burghers of our Republic and their privileges, in striking contrast with the origin of the inhabitants of this colony and their claims. But it would be a mere waste of words to dwell on the remarkable distinction to be drawn between burghers whose ancestors nobly fought for and conquered their freedom from tyranny, and from whose fortitude in the cause of liberty the very power of our Republic has sprung, and such as are named burghers here, who have been permitted as a matter of grace to have a residence in a land of which possession has been taken by the Sovereign Power, there to gain a livelihood as tillers of the earth, tailors and shoemakers. Here comparison is impossible.

Thus dismissing the political claims of these wretches, the Fiscal rends their modest request for commercial privileges with even greater ferocity.

The burghers (he continues) whose number is at present far too great, and whom on this account it will soon be found very difficult to restrain and govern, with a due regard to the preservation of the interests of the State and the honourable company, desired to be allowed a right of trading beyond the colony in ships freighted by them, to Europe, to the African coast, to India, to barter the produce of other lands for that of this country. Now, it is clear, and requires no lengthy argument, that for the purposes of enabling a subordinate colony to flourish as a colony, it is not always expedient to apply those means which, considered in the abstract, might be conducive to its prosperity. The object of paramount importance in legislation for colonies should be the welfare of the parent State of which such colony is but a subordinate part, and to which it owes its existence. No great penetration is needed to see plainly the impossibility of granting such a petition. The dangerous consequences which would result to the State in general, and in particular to the Honourable Company, from the concession to a colony, situated midway between Europe and the Indies of free commerce are manifest; it would soon be no longer a subordinate colony but an independent State.[1]

Is it not clear that, up to the day of the first British occupation in 1795, the 'free burghers' had not even reached the embryonic stage of desire for self-government in the sense in which that phrase was understood by British colonies of much younger growth? It could scarce have

[1] 'South Africa' ('The Temple Primers'), p. 27, Mr. Worsfold in a footnote says: 'I am indebted for these extracts from the petition and the report of the Fiscal to translations of these documents made by the late Judge Watermeyer.'

been otherwise. The nucleus of what, for convenience' sake, was styled a 'colony,' but was really a collection of camp-followers attached to the trading settlements of the Dutch East India Company, cannot be said to have been slandered by the rude sketch of their origin drawn by the Fiscal. Mr. A. H. Keane tells us that

> 'an appeal to authentic records shows plainly enough (1) that the great majority of the first arrivals were drawn from the lower grades of Dutch society, with whom were associated a large number of riff-raff from every part of Western Europe, attracted to the colony by agents and others known as "kidnappers," soldiers, seafaring folk, ne'er-do-weels, adventurers, and others greatly predominating; (2) that these were joined later by Dutch emigrants of a better class, and after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) leavened by a considerable body of Huguenots, representing all classes of French society—hence, although numerically inferior, greatly superior to the Dutch in most respects; (3) that the third ingredient was made up mainly of Germans, chiefly adventurers, soldiers and peasants from Hesse, Swabia, and other rural districts, arriving in small bodies at various times.'[1]

Again,

> 'The class of men who then (1657) and later thus acquired the status of free citizens did not seem to promise well for the future of the settlement. Mr. Theal, a trustworthy guide in all matters connected with the early relations of the colony, points out that "the sailors and soldiers of the company were not such men as had followed gallant Barendz to the Polar Seas or heroic Heemskerk in his glorious career. The Republic had barely sufficient of these to serve her at home, and had there been myriads of them, the company's service was the last employment to which they would have devoted themselves. For that service, in its lowest branches, had acquired a most disreputable name in Europe. A scarcity of seamen at first caused the company to make use of a set of wretches whom they termed 'agents,' but who were known to everyone else by the odious designation of 'kidnappers.' These persons were constantly busy endeavouring to entice

[1] 'The Boer States,' p. 146.

the unwary and vagabonds of all the countries of Western Europe into the service of their employers. The company paid them two months' wages in advance for each individual they ensnared, which amount gathered together a motley crew of spendthrifts, vagabonds, and simpletons, the very refuse of Europe. Yet among them were to be found men who had once moved in the higher circles of society, but who now, by their own crimes or their misfortunes, were reduced to the general level of their associates. This system, once commenced, could not be changed. To keep in subjection a number of men like these, rendered desperate by the circumstances in which they were placed, a discipline so severe was necessary, and was carried out with such determination, that no good seaman or soldier would enter the service. Cause and effect were thus continually reacting upon each other. It is not surprising that men, to free themselves from such a life, should be found willing to accept grants of land in South Africa on the terms prescribed by Commissioner Van Goens, and it is still less surprising that in general they made very unruly and improvident citizens." '[1]

It might have been thought that the advent of the French Huguenots, who ultimately constituted something between a sixth and an eighth of the whole population, would have leavened this not very promising mass. 'Some of them,' as Theal tells us, 'had been of high rank in France; others were manufacturers, others, again, vine-dressers and gardeners. Having lost everything in their flight, they landed in so destitute a condition that the authorities had to supply them in the same manner as discharged sailors and soldiers; but by their industry and frugality they soon placed themselves beyond the reach of want. It is from the date of their arrival that the manufacture of wine on a large scale was carried on.'[2] As it was to escape oppression for conscience' sake that the Huguenots fled their country, it is natural that the influence they exercised over those among whom they settled was religious rather than political. At any rate, they took not with them to South Africa that spirit of civic independence which the Pilgrim Fathers bore

[1] 'The Boer States,' pp. 151, 152.
[2] Theal, p. 90, quoted by Keane, p. 164.

to Plymouth Rock. The following passage from Theal might, it is true, be applied indifferently to the American Puritans and the South African Huguenots. Their deep religious feeling

> 'enabled them to push their way singly into the interior without schools or churches or shops, with only savages around them, yet without becoming savages themselves. A people less strong in faith would assuredly have been unable to do this. The practical part of their religion was drawn from the Old rather than from the New Testament, but where has this not been the case when Europeans have met races of another colour?'

It is well-nigh impossible to imagine any circumstances in which the Pilgrim Fathers and their descendants would, in a short time, have lost their language, their national characteristics and prejudices, and their inbred political convictions. Yet this is the case of the immigrant Afrikander. The French Huguenots within a very few years after their arrival had forgotten their mother-tongue, and had adopted the rude taal, or 'kitchen Dutch,' in use in their new environment. The authorities, indeed, began abolishing at once their language and their memories of the land from which they sprang. Regulations issued as early as 1728 ordained that religious services should be held in Dutch, and prescribed it as the official language in the law-courts and in all business transactions. French teachers were banished the schools, and the children were not allowed to learn the language of their ancestors. Such an extinction of racial characteristics would have been impossible but for the fact that the newcomers were preferred as husbands by the daughters of the old Boer settlers. It may be that the importation of a large number of well-educated girls from the Foundling Hospital at Amsterdam is accountable for that superiority of the women over the men which strikes the observer even now.[1] In

[1] Mr. Commissioner Cloete, himself a Dutchman, had an experience of the active part which women take in African politics, when he went to Maritzburg to settle with the Volksraad a dispute between Great Britain and the emigrant farmers. 'The proceedings,' says Mr. Theal ('History of South Africa,' iv. 359), 'were next interrupted by a mass meeting of the women of Maritzburg. The Commissioner good-naturedly went into the court-room where they were assembled, when he found every means of getting out closed against him. For two hours he was obliged to listen to an impassioned harangue from Mrs. Smit, the wife of the Reformed Church clergyman, in which their grievances were

any case, it remains true that the French element in the Afrikander population of Cape Colony, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony is out of all proportion to the number of the original Huguenot emigrants. Mr. Theal's account may perhaps explain the phenomenon.

> 'With the exception,' he says, 'of those who had held superior appointments, comparatively few of the servants of the Company discharged after this date (1688) became the heads of families. They were usually men already past the vigour of life when their freedom commenced, and their habits had frequently been such as to prevent them from being acceptable as husbands by the young white women of the settlement. To them most of the half-breeds owe their origin, though instances are not wanting of some among their number acquiring not alone wealth, but distinction among the colonists. At present there can be very few, if any, Dutch South Africans without a mixture of Huguenot blood in their veins.'[1]

If the elements of the first South African colony contained few germs out of which self-government was likely to be evolved, the soil in which these germs existed were in no wise favourable to growth. The rule of the Dutch East India Company was a rule of iron. As the Fiscal, in a passage I have quoted, frankly avowed, it aimed at suppressing anything in the nature of independence. The inevitable consequence was that the more enterprising settlers and their descendants, instead of combining for the purpose of securing liberty, sought it by escaping as far as possible from the centre of administration. To this desire more than to anything else must be attributed that passion for moving on which we found in the Boer when we first occupied the Cape, and which remains a prime characteristic

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enumerated, and which was followed by the unanimous declaration that, rather than submit to English rule again, they would march barefoot over the mountains to liberty or death.'

[1] As an example I take a list of the members of the House of Assembly which happens to be before me, and I find that out of some thirty-three or thirty-four non-English names no less than ten are of distinct Huguenot origin, though the pronunciation of the names has undergone the same modification as the characteristics of their original owners. The ancient family of De Villiers would hardly recognise themselves as Filjee or the Colberts scent a kinsman in a Groblaar.

of him to this day. The operation of this sentiment has been disastrous. For one thing, it prevented the development of civic instincts; for another, it originated and fostered that strange love of isolation, that distaste for the neighbourhood of men, even of his own race, which marks the Dutch Afrikander of to-day. The political consequences have been writ very large indeed. Left to himself, the Boer has never been capable of what we know as government. Common danger has leagued him with others of his breed for purposes of aggression or defence; but in circumstances of poverty as in circumstances of prosperity, he has ever been unequal to the task of civil administration. Take, for instance, the description of the short-lived Dutch Republic in Natal. Long after danger from the Zulus had been crushed by the defeat of Dingaan,

> 'When Mr. Cloete reached Maritzburg, the machinery of the emigrant Government, with the exception of the Volksraad, was at a complete standstill. There was not a sixpence in the treasury. The salaries of the officials, petty as they were, were months in arrear, and there was no prospect of any of them ever being paid. Since the loss of the Customs and the port dues, the receipts had been next to nothing. In all the country there was only one individual, an infirm half-breed, doing duty as a policeman. The Landdrosts gave judgment when cases were brought before them, but they had no means of enforcing their decisions, consequently their sentences were in most instances disregarded.'[1]

Wherever you turn the pages of Dutch Afrikander history you find the same story. The prosperity and the comparative immunity from revolution which characterized the Orange River State constituted no real exception. Its success was due in part to circumstances for which it can claim no credit—mainly, indeed, to the sagacity and statesmanship of one man. When John Brand was appointed (1863) to succeed Pretorius, the second President of the Orange Free State, the condition of the Republic was not unlike that which existed twenty years before in Natal, or

[1] Theal, 'History of South Africa,' vol. iv., p. 356.

that which fifteen years later was to lead to the annexation of the Transvaal. Brand, however, was really a product of English, and not of Afrikander, training. He had received his general as well as his legal education in England. He belonged to the English Bar, and at the time when he was chosen President he was a member of the Assembly in Cape Colony (his father was actually Speaker of the House). Yet, with all his advantages, he had hard work to govern a little State in which there was practically no native problem. As Mr. Trollope sets forth in his interesting history of South Africa, at the close of the war with Mosesh things in the Free State were about as bad as they could be.

> 'All the available means were spent. Blue-backs, as they were called, were printed, and the bankers issued little scraps of paper—"good-fors," as they were called, representing minute sums of money. Trade there was none, and the farmers had to fight the Basutos instead of cultivating their land. At that time the condition of the Free State was very bad indeed. I think I may say that its preservation was chiefly due to the firmness of Mr. Brand.'[1]

And, with his firmness and all his sagacity, it is more than likely that Mr. Brand would have failed to surmount the difficulties which confronted him but for the fortunate discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West. Whatever the merits of the dispute between the Imperial Government and the Orange Free State as to the ownership of the diamond-fields, it cannot be denied that the Republic had a great stroke of luck when it escaped the responsibility of governing the increasing community, and pocketed £100,000 as compensation from Great Britain. With that ready money President Brand was able to effect many useful reforms, and to enable the Orange Free State, not in itself a very fertile or attractive country, to take advantage of its geographical position, which, after the discovery of gold in the Rand, was destined to be its most valuable asset. But even in the administration of this easily-governed community he had to depend largely upon the assistance of Britain.

[1] 'South Africa,' vol. ii., p. 223.

In all respects the circumstances of the Transvaal were less favourable to the development of self-government than those of the Orange Free State. The effect of a rush of emigration is the antithesis of that of a physical deluge. In the latter case the grosser and heavier matter is first deposited, while the finer substances are carried on with the flood. With a stream of trekking colonists the process is reversed. The choicer atoms settle down as near to the confines of the civilization they have left as possible; the rougher and wilder spirits are carried further afield. This general law was exemplified in the case of those who, from the date of the Great Trek, had set their faces northward to escape the bustle and the worry which were nearly all that the Englishman represented to them, and were quite all that they hated in him. It was not to be expected that the elements of self-government would be found in such communities, nor at any time up to the annexation had there arisen a man who showed even the promise of capacity for welding into a coherent whole a parcel of 'jarring atoms' with nothing in common amongst them except identity of descent, a love of isolation, and an inbred intolerance of any and every sort of government.

These being the general conditions of Transvaal burgherdom (conditions which, it will be noted, had undergone no material change since the Great Trek), it remains to see what were the special circumstances which justified, if they did justify, the annexation of that country. The arbitrator's decision in the Keate Award had been accepted by President Pretorius, who certainly could not be described as a friend to Great Britain. He it was who removed the capital of the Transvaal from Potchefstroom to the more central settlement named after his father, Andreas Pretorius, the voortrekker, upon whose head a price of £2,000 had once been set by the British Governor. The Keate Award, though accepted by the President, was rejected by the Volksraad, and as a consequence Pretorius resigned. He was succeeded by Thomas François Burgers, an ex-minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. His so-called latitudinarianism had wrecked him in the ministry, and, as I have said, it proved his ruin in politics. Moreover, Burgers, though a member of one of

the oldest Afrikander families, was, like Brand, not wholly a product of the soil. He had received a more than usually liberal education in Europe, and he commanded a rhetorical fluency, both in Dutch and English, which stood him in good stead with a reticent people with a passion for preachers and public speakers. Like Brand, too, he had spent his early manhood in the atmosphere of Cape Colony. He was minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Hanover in the colony, and in 1864 he had been brought before an ecclesiastical tribunal on the charge of holding heretical views, and had been condemned and suspended from the ministry. He held his appointment, however, from the Colonial Government; he appealed to the civil law-courts against the decision of the clerical tribunal, and he won his case. An appeal from the Supreme Court of Cape Colony to the Privy Council in England resulted in a confirmation of the finding of the Colonial court, and in 1866 Burgers won another action against the presbytery of Graaff Reinet, which had sought to exclude him from membership. These facts must all be borne in mind; for they help to account for the indifference displayed by the Cape Dutch to the annexation until it grew clear that the heretical Burgers had committed the 'happy despatch' by accepting compensation from the British Government. Then, as now, the politics of the Cape Dutch were controlled by the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church, and up to this time the eloquence and ability of Burgers had so far prevailed that, out of 3,352 votes, no less than 2,964 were cast for him. Once President of the Transvaal Republic, he set to work to realize that dream of a United South African Republic which was to extend from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, and ultimately from the Zambesi to Cape Agulhas. Anthony Trollope, whom none would charge with spread-eagleism, has left a record of his observations in South Africa (1878), which is more impartial because, as he often reminds us, annexation had not at the time of his visit become a matter of party controversy.

'Burgers,' he tells us,[1] was known 'as an eloquent

[1] 'South Africa,' vol. ii., p. 40 *et seq.*

enthusiastic man, and was warmly welcomed in the Transvaal, where, if ever, a silent, patient, unobtrusive officer was wanted for the work which had to be done in consolidating the Republic. The country at the time was very poor. The treasury was empty, a paper currency had been set afloat in 1865, and was of course greatly depreciated. Taxes were with difficulty collected, and the quarrels with the natives were incessant. Mr. Burgers succeeded in raising a loan, and borrowed £60,000. . . . He established a national flag, which was, we may suppose, a cheap triumph. He had a gold coinage struck with a portraiture of himself—two or three hundred gold pieces worth twenty shillings each—which I will not hurt his feelings by calling sovereigns. This could not have cost much, as the coinage was so limited. They were, too, all made out of Transvaal gold. He set on foot a most high-flown scheme of education . . . which might not have been amiss had it not been utterly impracticable. He attempted to have the public lands surveyed, while he did not in the least know what the public lands were, and had no idea of their limits. There was to be a new code of laws before, as yet, he had judges or courts. Then he resolved that a railway should at once be made from Pretoria through the gold-fields of the Transvaal[1] down to Delagoa Bay, where the Portuguese have their settlement. For the sake of raising a loan for this purpose, he went in person to Holland, just when one would have thought his presence in his own country to be indispensable, and did succeed in saddling the Republic with a debt of £100,000 for railway properties. . . . To all this he added, so runs the rumour among those who were his friends in the Republic, many proud but too loudly spoken aspirations as to the future general destiny of the South African Republic. His mind seems to have been filled with the idea of competing with Washington for public admiration.'

In a document which he left to be published after his death, Mr. Burgers states that his visit to Europe had been undertaken on the authority of the Volksraad 'to carry out my plans for the development of the country by opening up a direct communication for it, free from the trammels of

[1] These were practically confined to the neighbourhood of Lydenburg.

British ports and influence.' He tells us, however, that his policy, which involved the establishment of a great Dutch Republic, 'with 8,000,000 of inhabitants,' was thwarted by those within his own State who took advantage of his absence.

The faction (Burgers says, in a memoir quoted by Mr. Rider Haggard —'The Last Boer War'[1]) of unprincipled fortune-hunters, rascals, and runaways on the one hand, and the faction of the extreme orthodox party in a certain branch of the Dutch Reformed Church[2] on the other, began to co-operate against the Government of the Republic and me personally. . . . Ill as I was, and contrary to the advice of my medical men, I proceeded to Europe in the beginning of 1875 to carry out my project, and no sooner was my back turned on the Transvaal than the conspiring elements began to act. The new coat of arms and flag adopted in the Raad by an almost unanimous vote were abolished; the laws for a free and secular education were tampered with. And my resistance to a reckless inspection and disposal of Government lands still occupied by natives was openly defied. The Raad, filled up to a large extent with men of ill-repute, who under the cloak of progress and favour to the Government view obtained their seats, was too weak to cope with the skill of the conspirators, and granted leave to the acting President[3] to carry out measures diametrically opposed to my policy. Native lands were inspected and given out to a few speculators, who held large numbers of claims to lands which were destined for citizens, and so a war was prepared for me on my return from Europe which I could not avert.

The methods alluded to by President Burgers in this posthumous paper were set out more minutely in a despatch by Mr. Osborn, afterwards Secretary to the Transvaal, which bore date September 22, 1876:

The Boers, as they have done in other cases, and are still doing, encroach by degrees on native territory. They commence by obtaining permission to graze stock on certain portions of it at certain seasons of the year, followed by individual grazers obtaining from native head-men a sort of right or license to squat upon certain defined portions ostensibly in order to keep other Boer squatters away from the same land. These licenses, temporarily intended as friendly or neighbourly acts by authorized head-men, after a few seasons of occupation by the Boer, are construed by him as title, and his permanent occupation ensues. Damage for trespass is levied by him from the very man from whom he obtained the right to squat, to which the natives submit out of fear of the matter reaching the ears of the paramount chief, who would in all probability severely punish them for opening the door to encroachment by the Boer. After a while, however, the matter comes to a crisis in consequence of the incessant disputes between the Boers and the natives. One or other of the disputants lays the case before the paramount chief, who when hearing both parties is literally frightened with violence and threats by the Boer into granting him the land. Upon this, the usual plan followed by

[1] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 25. [2] The Doppers. [3] Joubert.

the Boer is at once to collect a few neighbouring Boers, including a Field-Cornet, or even an acting provisional Field-Cornet, appointed by the Field-Cornet or provisional Cornet, the latter to represent the Government, although without instructions authorizing him to act in the matter. A few cattle are collected amongst themselves, which the party takes to the chief, and his signature is obtained to a written document alienating to the republican Boers a large slice of his territory. The contents of this document are, as far as I can make out, never clearly or intelligibly explained to the chief, who signs and accepts of the cattle under the impression that it is all in settlement of hire for the grazing licenses granted by his head-men. This, I have no hesitation in saying, is the usual method by which the Boers obtain what they call concessions to them of territories by native chiefs. In Sikukuni's case they allege that his father Sequati ceded to them the whole of his territory (hundreds of square miles) for a hundred head of cattle.

It is not to be wondered at that in these circumstances the South African Republic's relations with the native tribes on all sides of it should have been extremely bad. The view which the Dutch Afrikanders took of the predestined position of the coloured races in the order of creation was altogether different from that which has governed our policy in the like circumstances. They regarded them in the light of creatures either dangerous or venomous, like the lion or the cobra, which must be cleared out before the white man could settle in the country; or, at the best, they looked on them as animals capable of subjection for man's use, and entitled at the most to the same kindliness as is shown to horse and dog. Evidence on this point flows in from every source of information open to the historian. I will content myself here with the testimony of so impartial a witness as Mr. Anthony Trollope. Speaking of the origin of the Dutch Republic, which (be it ever remembered) dated no further back than 1848, he says[1]:

A sort of republic was at once established, of which Pretorius was at first the acknowledged rather than the elected chief. The most perfect freedom for the white man, which was supposed to include perfect equality, was to be maintained by a union of their forces against the natives of the country. Mazulekatze had been ejected, and the Bechuanas were again coming in upon their old land. Then there were new troubles, which seemed always to end in the subjection of a certain number of the natives to the domestic institutions of the Dutch. The children of those who rebelled and were taken as prisoners were bound as apprentices in the families of the Dutch farmers, and as such were used as slaves. There can be no doubt that such was the case. All the evidence that there is on the subject goes to prove it, and the practice was one entirely in

[1] 'South Africa,' vol. ii., p. 33.

accordance with Dutch sympathies and Dutch manners. It is often pointed out to an inquirer that the position of the little urchins who were thus brought into contact with civilization was thereby much improved. Such an argument cannot be accepted as worth anything until the person using it is brought to admit that the child so apprenticed is a slave and the master a slave-owner. Then the argument is brought back to the great question whether slavery as an institution is beneficial or the reverse. But even a Dutchman will generally avoid that position. . . . Andreas Pretorius was the first President of the new established and recognised nationality, which, with the weak ambition which has assisted much in bringing it to its ruin, soon called itself the South African Republic, as though it were destined to swallow up, not only the Free State, but the British colonies also. In this, however, Andreas Pretorius himself had no part. The passion of his soul seems to have been separation from the British, not dominion over them. He died in July, 1853, and his son was elected in his place. The father was certainly a remarkable man, the one who of all his class was the most determined to liberate himself from the thraldom of English opinions. Mr. Theal, in his 'History of South Africa,' well describes how this man had become what he was by continued reading of the Old Testament. The sanguinary orders given to the chosen people of the Lord were to him orders which he was bound to obey as were they. Mr. Theal quotes a special passage from the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy, to which I will refer my reader: 'When thou comest nigh unto a city fight against it.' The Israelites are enjoined either to slay or to enslave, and Pretorius felt that such were the commands given to him in reference to those natives amongst whom his lot had cast him. They were to him the people of the cities which were 'very far off,' and whom he had divine order to enslave, while the more unfortunate ones, who would still fain occupy the lands on which it suited him and his people to dwell, were the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, whom the Lord had commanded him utterly to destroy. With such authority before him, and while black labour was so necessary to the cultivation of the land, how could he doubt about slavery? In studying the peculiarity of the Dutch character in South Africa and the aversion of the people to our ways, we have always to remember that they had been brought up for ages in the strictest belief in the letter of Scripture. The very pictures in their Bibles were to them true pictures because they were there. It was so two hundred years ago with a large sect in Europe, from which sect they had sprung. They had grown in the new land without admixture with the progressing ideas of Europe. They had neither been enlightened nor contaminated by new systems of belief or unbelief. So it has come to pass that an institution which is so abhorrent to us as to make us feel that the man who is stained by it must be a godless sinner is still to them a condition of things directly authorized and ordered by the Almighty. By our persistency, by our treaties, by our power of enforcing upon their inferior condition as the very trade-mark of our superiority the command that slavery shall exist no longer, we have driven them to deny it, and have almost convinced them, that slavery is no longer possible. But that heartfelt hatred of slavery which is now common to all of us in England has not yet reached the Dutchman of South Africa, and is hardly as strong in the bosoms of all British South African colonists as it might be.

After the death of the elder Pretorius, the Republic had by no means a quiet or a bloodless time. The capital was then at Potchefstroom, near the Vaal, while the enormous territory claimed by it to the north was almost without government. There are stories of terrible massacres

amidst the records of the Republic, of fearful revenge inflicted on the white man by the savage whose lands had been taken from him, and of tenfold, hundredfold revenge following quick upon the heads of the wretched people. 'Thou shalt utterly destroy them,' and therefore a whole tribe was smothered and starved to death within the caves in which they had taken refuge. We read that 'for years afterwards the supremacy of the white man was unquestioned in that part of the Transvaal,' and we can easily believe it. For some years the Republic hardly had any other history but that of its contests with the natives and its efforts to extend its borders by taking land wherever its scanty European population could extend itself. The cities 'very far off' were all their legitimate prey.

Livingstone has a passage on the practice, generally observed by the commandoes, of shooting down the men and women and capturing their little ones as young as possible, so that they might forget their murdered parents and their native language, and thus make more apt apprentices[1]:

It is difficult for a person in a civilized country to conceive that any body of men possessing the common attributes of humanity—as these Boers are by no means destitute of the better feelings of our nature—should with one accord set out, after loading their own wives and children with caresses, and proceed to shoot down in cold blood men and women of a different colour, it is true, but possessed of domestic feelings and affections equal to their own. . . . It was long before I could quite give credit to the tales of bloodshed told by native witnesses, and had I received no other testimony but theirs I should probably have remained sceptical to this day as to the truth of the accounts. But when I found the Boers themselves, some bewailing and denouncing, others glorying, in the bloody scenes in which they had been themselves the actors, I was compelled to admit the validity of the testimony and try to account for the cruel anomaly. They are all traditionally religious, tracing their descent from some of the best men, Huguenots and Dutch, the world ever saw. Hence they claim to themselves the title of 'Christians,' and all the coloured races are 'black property' or 'creatures.' They being the chosen people of God, the heathen are given to them for an inheritance, and they are the rod of Divine vengeance on the heathen, as were the Jews of old.

Mr. A. H. Keane quotes to the same effect a statement by the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie[2]:

They have persuaded themselves by some wonderful mental process that they are God's chosen people, and that the blacks are the wicked and condemned Canaanites, over whose heads the Divine anger lowers continually. . . . They shot them down like vermin. . . . Dutchmen will tell you that in a certain engagement the 'heathen' loss was so many, and theirs so many 'Christians' murdered.

[1] 'Livingstone and the Exploration of Central Africa,' p. 85 *et seq.*
[2] 'The Boer States,' p. 137.

Mr. Ludorf, another missionary, whose statement was confirmed by the State Attorney, writes thus:

A number of native children who were too young to be removed had been collected in a heap, covered with long grass, and burned alive. Other atrocities had been committed, but these were too horrible to relate.[1]

Khama, who by universal admission has proved one of the most enlightend and intelligent natives with whom we have ever had to deal, wrote on August 22, 1876, under cover to Sir Henry Barkly, to 'Victoria, the great Queen of the English people,' as follows:

I write to you, Sir Henry, in order that your Queen may preserve for me my country, it being in her hands. The Boers are coming into it, and I do not like them. Their actions are cruel among us black people. We are like money. They sell us and our children. I ask Her Majesty to pity me and to hear that which I write quickly. I wish to hear upon what conditions Her Majesty will receive me and my country and my people under her protection. I am weary with fighting I do not like war, and I ask Her Majesty to give me peace. I am very much distressed that my people are being destroyed by war, and I wish them to obtain peace. I ask Her Majesty to defend me as she defends all her people. There are three things which distress me very much—war, selling people, and drink. All these things I shall find in the Boers, and it is these things which destroy people to make an end of them in the country. The custom of the Boers has always been to cause people to be sold, and to-day they are still selling people. Last year I saw them pass with two waggons full of people whom they had bought at the river at Tanane.

Says the special correspondent of the *Cape Argus*, writing on December 12, 1876, to a journal, be it noted, read by hun-

[1] At the meeting at Potchefstroom in 1868, at which Mr. Ludorf made this statement, Mr. J. G. Steyn, ex-President of the Orange Free State, declared that 'there now was innocent blood on our hands which had not yet been avenged, and the curse of God rested on the land in consequence.' Another burgher, remarked that 'it was a singular circumstance that, in the different colonial Kaffir wars, as also in the Basuto wars, one did not hear of destitute children being found by the commandoes,' and asked how it was that every petty commando that took the field in this Republic invariably found numbers of destitute children. He gave it as his opinion that 'the present system of apprenticeship was an essential cause of our frequent hostilities with the natives.' Mr. Jan Talyard said 'children were forcibly taken from their parents, and were then called destitute and apprenticed.' Mr. Daniel Van Nooren was heard to say, 'if they had to clear the country, and could not have the children they found, he would shoot them.' Mr. Field-Cornet Furstenburg stated that 'when he was at Zoutpansberg with his burghers, the chief Katsekats was told to come down from the mountains; that he sent one of his subordinates as a proof of amity; that whilst a delay of five days was guaranteed by Commandant Paul Kruger who was then in command, the orders were given at the same time to attack the natives at break of day, which was accordingly done, but which resulted in total failure.'

dreds of Dutchmen who would only too gladly have exposed misstatements if possible:

The whole world may know it, for it is true, and investigation will only bring out the horrible details, that through the whole course of this Republic's existence it has acted in contravention of the Sand River Treaty; and slavery has occurred not only here and there in isolated cases, but as an unbroken practice, and has been one of the peculiar institutions of the country, mixed up with all its social and political life. It has been at the root of most of its wars; it has been carried on regularly even in times of peace; it has been characterized by all those circumstances which have so often roused the British nation to indignant protest and to repeated efforts to banish the slave trade from the world. The Boers have not only fallen on unsuspecting kraals simply for the purpose of obtaining women and children and cattle, but they have carried on a traffic through natives who have kidnapped the children of their weaker neighbours and sold them to the white man. Again, the Boers have sold and exchanged their victims among themselves. Waggon-loads of slaves have been conveyed from one end of the country to the other for sale. And that with the cognizance of, and for the direct advantage of, the highest officials of the land. The writer has himself seen in a town situated in the south of the Republic the children who had been brought down from a remote northern district. One fine morning, in walking through the streets, he was struck with the number of little black strangers standing about certain houses, and wondered where they could have come from. He learned a few hours later that they were part of loads which were disposed of on the outskirts of the town the day before. The circumstances connected with some of these kidnapping excursions are appalling, and the barbarities practised by cruel masters upon some of these defenceless creatures during the course of their servitude are scarcely less horrible than those reported from Turkey. It is no disgrace in this country for an official to ride a fine horse which was got for two Kaffir children, to procure whom father and mother were shot.

An affidavit sworn by the Rev. John Thorne, curate of St. John the Evangelist, Lydenburg, Transvaal, laid before the Royal Commission appointed to settle Transvaal affairs, runs thus:

I was appointed to the charge of a congregation in Potchefstroom about thirteen years ago, when the Republic was under the presidency of Mr. Pretorius. I remember noticing one morning, as I walked through the streets, a number of young natives whom I knew to be strangers. I inquired where they came from. I was told that they had just been brought from Zoutspanberg. This was the locality from which slaves were chiefly brought at that time, and were traded for under the name of 'black ivory.' One of these natives belonged to Mr. Munich, the State Attorney. It was a matter of common remark at that time that the President of the Republic was himself one of the greatest dealers in slaves.

Take now the fourth paragraph of the same affidavit;

Rev. Dr. Nachtigall, of the Berlin Missionary Society, was the interpreter for Shatane's people in the private office of Mr. Roth, and at the close of the interview told me what had occurred. On my expressing surprise, he went on to relate that he had information on native matters which would surprise me more. He then produced the copy of a register, kept in the Landdrost's office, of men, women, and children to the number of four hundred and eighty (480) who had been disposed of by one Boer to another for a consideration. In one case an ox was given in exchange, in another goats, in a third a blanket, and so forth. Many of these natives he (Dr. Nachtigall) knew personally. The copy was certified as true and correct by an official of the Republic, and I would mention his name now, only that I am persuaded it would cost the man his life if his act became known to the Boers.

Amongst other documents handed in for the consideration of the Royal Commission is the statement of a head-man, whose name it was considered advisable to omit in the blue-book lest the Boers took vengeance on him. This statement was made just before the retrocession of the Transvaal by Mr. Gladstone's Government, and runs as follows:

I say that if the British Government dies I shall die, too; I would rather die than be under the Boer Government. I am the man who helped to make bricks for the church you see now standing in the square here (Pretoria) as a slave without payment. As a representative of my people, I am still obedient to the English Government, and willing to obey all commands from them, even to die for their cause in this country, rather than submit to the Boers. I was under Shambok, my chief, who fought the Boers formerly, but he left us, and we were put up to auction and sold to the Boers. I want to state this myself to the Royal Commission in Newcastle. I was bought by Fritz Botha and sold by Frederick Botha, who was then Veld-Cornet of the Boers.

To the statement Mr. Rider Haggard, from whose book I have borrowed most of these extracts, appends this footnote:

I have taken the liberty to quote all these extracts exactly as they stand in the original instead of weaving their substance into my narrative, in order that I may not be accused, as so often happens to others who write upon this subject, of having presented a garbled version of the truth. The original of every extract is to be found in the blue-books presented to Parliament. I have thought it best to confine myself to these, and avoid repeating the stories of cruelty and slavery, however well authenticated, that have come to my knowledge privately, such stories being always more or less open to suspicion.[1]

Sir Henry Barkly, who is supposed to have viewed the annexation of the Transvaal with little favour, at the end of a despatch dated December 18, 1876, enclosing evidence

[1] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 45.

of the most fearful atrocities done by the Boers, expresses a hope that the course of events will enable Her Majesty's Government to take such steps 'as will terminate this wanton and useless bloodshed, and prevent the recurrence of scenes of injustice, cruelty, and rapine, which abundant evidence is every day forthcoming to prove have rarely ceased to disgrace the Republics beyond the Vaal ever since they first sprang into existence.' I have noted elsewhere how little the Boers have changed in character, habits, and ideas during the last century. And it may be interesting to compare the statements made above with a passage cited by Mr. Keane[1] from Theal's 'History of South Africa between 1770 and 1780':

A perusal of the authentic documents of the colony at this period is sufficient to startle the most callous, so vividly are the sufferings of the slaves therein portrayed, without any intention on the part of the writers to create sympathy for the bondsman. At the will of the man who happened to own them, they could be sold at any moment. The members of a family could be separated for ever; they could be flogged, ill-fed, ill-housed, compelled to perform any service. Their punishment for crimes against the community was out of all proportion to that inflicted upon free men for the same offence. A great many of these unfortunates were born free, and, while some had been enslaved for their crimes and sent hither from Batavia, the majority were guilty of no offence against the white man. They were simply ensnared, or else were purchased from some tribe with which their own was at war.

Thus, too, the same historian, speaking of the native policy of the same period:

The natives were hunted down by commandoes in a manner which must ever leave a stigma upon the memory of the frontier colonists of the last (eighteenth) century. The usual course was for a farmer to complain to the Landdrost that his cattle had been stolen by Hottentots or Bushmen; the Landdrost reported the matter to the Government, and requested a supply of powder and lead, which was usually granted. The farmers of the district were then called together, and proceeded to attack the nearest kraals. No mercy was shown to adults, but the children were spared to be parcelled out as servants amongst all the members of the commando. Many of the reports made by the commanders of these expeditions to their Landdrosts have been published from time to time, so that it is not alone from the statements of travellers that we are made aware of their proceedings. They themselves made no attempt to conceal or gloss over what had been done, for most of them really believed that they were doing God a service by—as they expressed it—extirpating the heathen root and branch.

Last of all, the attitude of the Boers towards the native

[1] 'Boer States,' p. 155.

races is very fairly summed up in Mr. T. F. Carter's 'Narrative of the Boer War,' originally published in 1882.

If there is one reason more than another (he says[1]) that makes British rule distasteful and execrable to the Boers of the Transvaal, it is the divergence of opinion which marks our estimate of a man with a black skin from their estimate of him. This is the fundamental grievance, and one that is not confined only to the Transvaal Boers. It is their inexorable, immutable resolution and faith that there can be no equality of coloured persons with them either in Church or State. The contempt the Boer has for the Kaffir, the length to which he will descend to prove that feeling, is one of the worst traits in Boer character. He will have nothing to do with the Kaffir beyond getting all he can out of him, either in the shape of service or gifts; there the connection ends; no return in the way of raising the mind of the Kaffir or revealing to him the privileges which they themselves obtained from the ponderous family Bible can be made by the Boer. They are a truly conservative race; what they themselves are they are content they should remain, and that their children should be no better and no worse than they are, and this conservative principle they apply to the blacks. What God made them they must remain—hewers of wood and drawers of water, the servant of the white man.

Mr. Carter's testimony is the more valuable because he has also a low opinion of the traditional British policy towards the black man:

We have always[2] been boasting of our love of justice and our desire to do justice to them, whilst by our actions we have been proving the hollowness of our speech. For ever telling them we intend to raise them, for ever we continue to confirm them in their barbarism. The Boers are by far and away more honest in this respect than we are; they do not pretend to love the blacks; they do not pretend to educate and elevate them; on the contrary, they are very much grieved that anyone should propose such a scheme. They do not pretend to wish to do justice to the Kaffirs; they only pretend to keep them in strict subjection, on the principle that the superior race must govern the inferior race if that race is black. The Kaffirs have, like the English, always been getting in the way of the Boers in South Africa, and have always been their enemies; and for this reason, that the Boers, like the English, have always coveted what belonged to the Kaffirs. With the British it is necessary to find some salve for the conscience after dispossessing the Kaffir of his land. The salve we apply is that of improving the Kaffir and preventing bloodshed amongst them as soon as we have done our share of that business; but the Boer conscience does not require any such apology. Since we do not improve the Kaffirs—it is a notorious fact that the few Christian Kaffirs there are, are, as regards the vast majority, far greater rogues than the heathen in his blindness—and since our policy has been productive of as much bloodshed as if we had left them alone, I say the Boers are more honest than the English in this connection.

I have quoted this passage simply to show that, on the authority of one who looked with small sympathy on British

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

treatment of the native, the Boer policy was, as it has ever been, inconsistent with that adopted by Englishmen of all political schools. But whatever the inherent defects of the Boer as a politician, and however incapable he had proved himself of applying the most elementary arts of government, it was at least assumed that his system had sufficient cohesion to enable him to hold his own against the Kaffirs. This, the mainstay of his claim, was now to break down. It is unnecessary to enter into a detailed account of the war with Sikukuni, which arose out of a quarrel as to the ownership of land which had been transferred by the Swazis under one of those bogus sales to which I have already referred. It is in accordance with the irony of history that the immediate cause of the war was the action of a Christian Kaffir who had received the name of Johannes, and was a brother of Sikukuni's. This Johannes used to live at a place called Potsobelo, a mission-station of Mr. Merenski, who moved to a stronghold on the Spekboom River, in the disputed territory. The Boers sent to him to come back, but he refused, and warned the Boers off his land. Sikukuni was then appealed to, but declared that the land belonged to his tribe, and repeated the warning. Sikukuni told them that he did not wish to fight, but that he was ready to do so if they preferred it. Burgers collected a commando of about 2,500 white men, which included a large number of Germans and English, and he also appealed to the Swazis to lend their assistance. In the encounters which had previously taken place between the Boers and the natives, the former had always kept upon the defensive, and from the shelter of their laagers had repulsed the onslaughts of the most fanatically brave Bantu tribes. Except in pursuit of a beaten foe, they had never previously assumed the offensive. As we ourselves have experienced, the fighting merits of the Boer, though considerable in the kind of warfare to which training has inured him, are not conspicuous in attack.[1] On July 14, 1876, the signal to attack the stronghold of Johannes was given to the joint forces of the Boers and the Swazis. The Boers, however, refused to advance to the assault, which

[1] Exception must be made in favour of Delarey's commando, whose chief exploits occurred as this book was passing through the press.

was undertaken by the Swazis alone, and was crowned with success. Scenes of great barbarity were witnessed, and the triumphant Swazis murdered nearly all the women and children in cold blood. Johannes himself was wounded unto death, and died some two days after the battle. His last words to his brother Sikukuni were: 'I am going to die. I am thankful I did not die by the hand of those cowardly Boers, but by the hand of a black and courageous nation like myself.' He took leave of his people, told his brother to read the Bible, and expired. The Swazis, outraged by what they considered the gross cowardice of their white allies, returned to their homes.

On August 2, 1876, orders were given to attack Sikukuni's mountain in two columns. But, in a phrase that has since become historic, the Boers refused to 'face the music.' Only forty men advanced to the attack, and they were mostly English and Germans. Burgers himself seems to have behaved well, and begged his burghers to shoot him rather than to desert him. They, however, refused to take any more part in the fighting, and disbanded to their homes. Burgers retired with a few men to Steelport, where he built a fort, and then returned to Pretoria. A passage from Dr. Theal, written in October, 1876, shows how disastrous this disgraceful fiasco seemed to be to all white men.

> The dispersion (he says) of the commando was followed, as a matter of course, by the devastation of the districts bordering upon Sikukuni's country. For a time a large portion of the Republic appeared to be at the mercy of the Bapedi, but they were afraid of advancing far from their strongholds. The condition of affairs in October is almost as bad as can be imagined. The free-lances have as yet done nothing to weaken the power of the enemy, while the employment of such a force is regarded with disfavour by the other South African countries. The horrible barbarities committed by the native contingents, such as butchering women and children in cold blood, have prevented much sympathy being felt for the Republic by outsiders, though the Government cannot fairly be charged with authorizing any such acts of cruelty.[1]

In view of the later attitude of Dr. Theal, this confession of faith is more convincing than almost any other evidence that could be cited. How serious the situation was can scarce be realized by those who forget that the success achieved by Sikukuni's people was the first of its kind in

[1] Theal, quoted by Keane, 'The Boer States,' p. 242.

South Africa. Defeats and surprises and reverses there had been before, as there were to be again, but never had whites repulsed by natives deliberately given up the job as hopeless, and in this way ruined the white man's prestige, which is a better protector than his rifle. President Burgers, in his despair, had recourse to a remedy which was almost as bad as the disease. He entrusted the business of raising an irregular force to a certain Captain von Schlickmann, a German, who raised his volunteers by promises of loot. With him was associated a certain Erasmus, whom we recently captured,[1] and of whom Lord (then Sir Garnet) Wolseley spoke at a public dinner 'as a fiend in human form.' Of their methods of harrying the Kaffirs, Sir Henry Barkly (to Lord Carnarvon, December 18, 1876) adduces proof and to spare:

As Von Schlickmann has since fallen fighting bravely, it is not without reluctance that I join in affixing this dark stain on his memory; but truth compels me to add the following extract from a letter which I have since received from one whose name—which I communicate to your Lordship privately—forbids disbelief: 'There is no longer the slightest doubt as to the murder of the two women and the child at Steelport by the direct order of Schlickmann; and in the attack on the kraal near which these women were captured—or some attack about that period—he ordered his men to cut the throats of all the wounded. This is no mere report; it is positively true.'

Sir Henry concluded by expressing a hope I have already recorded that the course of events will enable Her Majesty's Government to take such steps 'as will terminate this wanton and useless bloodshed, and prevent the recurrence of the scenes of injustice, cruelty, and rapine, which abundant evidence is every day forthcoming to prove have rarely ceased to disgrace the Republics beyond the Vaal ever since they first sprang into existence.'

Of Erasmus we read[2] that in the month of October he attacked a kraal of friendly Kaffirs:

The people of the kraals, taken quite by surprise, fled when they saw their foes, and most of them took shelter in the neighbouring Bush. Two or three men were distinctly seen in their flight from the kraal, and one of them is known to have been wounded. According to my informant, the remainder were women and children, who were pursued into the Bush, and there, all shivering and shrieking, were put to death by the Boers'

[1] March, 1901.

[2] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 35.

Kaffirs, some being shot, but the majority being stabbed with assegais. After the massacre, he counted thirteen women and three children, but he says he did not see the body of a single man. Another Kaffir said, pointing to a place in the road where the stones were thickly strewn: 'The bodies of the women and children lay like those stones.' The Boer before mentioned, who had been stationed outside, has told one of his own friends, who he thought would not mention it, that the shrieks were fearful to hear.

This is no isolated instance, for the blue-books of the time teem with incidents at least as revolting. I have quoted these particular cases for the reason that they have appeared in widely-circulated books, and must therefore be familiar to the champions of the Boers both at the time of the retrocession controversy and during the later discussion on our policy towards the Dutch. It is significant enough that, in Mr. Reitz's extraordinary mosaic of falsehood issued as an appeal to the Afrikanders at the outbreak of the present war, the sole reference to the state of affairs runs thus:

As a crowning act in these deeds of shame came the annexation of the Transvaal by Shepstone on the 12th of April, 1877. Sir Bartle Frere was sent out as Governor to Cape Town by Lord Carnarvon to carry out the federation policy later. Shepstone was also sent to the Transvaal to annex the State in case the consent of the Volksraad or that of the majority of the inhabitants could be obtained. . . . Shepstone's chief pretexts for the annexation were that the Transvaal could not subdue Sikukuni, and that the Zulus threatened to overpower the Transvaal. As far as Sikukuni is concerned, he had shortly before sued for peace, and the Transvaal Republic had fined him 2,000 head of cattle. With regard to the Zulus, the threatened danger was never felt by the Republic. Four hundred burghers had crushed the Zulu power in 1838, and the burghers had crowned Panda, Cetewayo's father, in 1840.[1]

Perhaps the best evidence that can be cited, because it is taken from a hostile source (a source upon which I have always preferred to draw), is supplied by a speech read from manuscript by President Burgers to the Raad more than a month before the annexation:[2]

I would rather be a policeman under a strong Government than a President of such a State. It is you—you members of the Raad and the Boers—who have lost the country, who have sold your independence for a soupie (a drink). You have ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty. . . . We should delude ourselves by entertaining the hope that matters would mend by-and-by; it would be only self-deceit. I tell you

[1] 'A Century of Wrong,' p. 26.
[2] 'A Narrative of the Boer War' (Carter), p. 35 *et seq.*

openly matters are as bad as they ever can be; they cannot be worse. These are bitter truths, and people may perhaps turn their backs on me; but then I shall have the consolation of having done my duty. . . . It is said here this or that man must be relieved from taxes because the Kaffirs have driven them off their farms and occupied the latter. By this you proclaim to the world that the strongest man is master here, that the right of the strongest obtains here. (Mr. Maré: 'This is not true.') Then, it is not true what the honourable member, Mr. Breytenbach, has told us about the state of the Lydenburg district; then it is not true, either, what another member has said about the farms in Saltpansberg which are occupied by Kaffirs. Neither is it true, then, what I saw with my own eyes at Lydenburg, where the burghers had been driven off their farms by the Kaffirs, and where Johannes was ploughing and sowing on the land of a burgher. These are facts, and they show that the strongest man is the master here. The fourth point which we have to take into account affects our relations with our English neighbours. It is asked, What have they got to do with our position? I tell you, as much as we have to do with that of our Kaffir neighbours. As little as we can allow barbarities among the Kaffirs on our borders, as little can they allow that in a State on their borders anarchy and rebellion should prevail. . . . Do you know what recently happened in Turkey because no civilized government was carried on there? The Great Powers interfered, and said, 'Thus far, and no further'; and if this is done to an Empire, will the little Republic be excused when it misbehaves? . . . Complain to other Powers, and seek justice there? Yes, thank God, justice is still to be found even for the most insignificant, but it is precisely the justice which will convict us. If we want justice, we must be in the position to ask it with unsullied hands. . . . Whence has arisen that urgency to make an appeal for interference elsewhere? and has that appeal been made only by enemies of the State? Oh no, gentlemen; it has arisen from real grievances. Our people have degenerated from their former position; they have become demoralized; they are not what they ought to be. . . . To-day a bill for £1,100 was laid before me for signature, but I would sooner have cut off my right hand than sign that paper, for I have not the slightest ground to expect that when that bill becomes due there will be a penny to pay it with.[1]

The report now gives the President's words in the third person:

The principal thing which had brought them to their present position was that to which they would not give attention. It was not this or that thing which impeded their way, but they themselves stopped the way; and if they asked him what prevented the people from remaining independent, he answered that the Republic was itself the obstruction, owing to the inherent incapacity and weakness of the people. Whence this weakness? Was it because they were deformed, because they were worse than other people, because they were too few and insignificant to occupy the country? Those arguments did not weigh with him. They were not true; he did not consider them of any importance. The people were as good as any other people, but they were completely demoralized; they had lost faith in God, reliance upon themselves, or trust in each other. Hence he believed they were inherently weak. . . .

[1] The one-pound notes of the Transvaal State were at this time worth one shilling each.

He did not believe that a new Constitution would save them; for as little as the old Constitution had brought them to ruin, so little would a new Constitution bring them salvation. . . . The Great Powers, with all their greatness, all their thousands of soldiers, would fall as quickly as this State had fallen, and even more quickly, if their citizens were to do what the citizens of this State had done. If the citizens of England had behaved towards the Crown as the burghers of this State had behaved to their Government, England would never have stood as long as she had, not even as long as this State had stood. This State owed obligations to other countries; they knew that the fire which had nearly consumed this State would, if felt by them, very soon consume them also. . . . In several of the cities of Holland there were people who had subscribed for only one debenture because they thought men of their own blood were living in South Africa. What was the consequence? The interest up to July last had been paid; in January of this year £2,250 was due for interest, and there was not a penny to meet it. . . . To take up arms and fight was nonsense; to draw the sword would be to draw the sword against God, for it was God's judgment that the State was in the condition that it was to-day; and it was their duty to inquire whether they should immerse in blood the thousands of innocent inhabitants of this country, and if so what for? For an idea — something they had in their heads, but not in their hearts—for an independence which is not prized? Let them make the best of the situation, and get the best terms they possibly could; let them agree to join their hands to those of their brethren in the South, and then from the Cape to the Zambesi there would be one great people. Yes, there was something grand in that, grander even than their idea of a Republic, something which ministered to their national feeling. And would this be so miserable? Yes, this would be miserable for those who would not be under the law, for the rebel and the revolutionist, but welfare and prosperity for the men of law and order. They must not underrate their real and many difficulties. He could point to the south-western border, the Zulu, the gold-fields, and other questions, and show them that it was their duty to come to an arrangement with the British Government, and to do so in a bold and manly manner. The honourable member on Saturday last had spoken with fervent patriotism, but he had failed to appreciate the reference, because it amounted to this, that they must shut their eyes to everything so as to keep their independence.

A month later, in a letter which Shepstone wrote to Burgers[1] announcing the impending annexation of the country, he said:

I have more than once assured your Honour that if I could think of any plan by which the independence of the State could be maintained by its own internal resources I would most certainly not conceal that plan from you.

And in the posthumous apologia left behind him, Burgers says:

I met Shepstone alone in my house, and opened up the subject of his mission. With a candour that astonished me, he avowed that his

[1] April 9, 1877.

purpose was to annex the country, as he had sufficient grounds for it, unless I could so alter as to satisfy his Government. My plan of a new Constitution, modelled after that of America, of a standing police force of 200 mounted men, was then proposed. He promised to give me time to call the Volksraad together, and to abandon his design if the Volksraad would adopt these measures and the country be willing to submit to them and to carry them out.

And he asserts with much emphasis in justice to Shepstone: 'I would not consider an officer of my Government to have acted faithfully if he had not done what Shepstone did.'

It has been argued that Shepstone acted with unnecessary precipitation, and that he issued the proclamation of annexation before Sir Bartle Frere could take up the reins in Cape Town, out of fear of intervention on the part of the new High Commissioner. In fact, however, Shepstone was aware of a danger which threatened, not only the Transvaal, but the whole white population of South Africa. Only very prompt action could avert. Sikukuni was regarded, by Kaffirs and white men alike, as Cetewayo's dog, and no one in South Africa believed that he would have presented so bold a front to the Boers if he had not had the best of reasons for knowing that Cetewayo's impis were behind him. Mr. Rider Haggard, who was of Shepstone's staff, states the position in his book, from which I have already frequently quoted.

Towards the second week in April (he says[1]), or a week before the proclamation of annexation was issued, things began to look very serious. Indeed, rumours that could hardly be discredited reached the special Commissioner that the whole Zulu army was collected in a chain of impis, or battalions, with the intention of bursting into the Transvaal and sweeping the country. Knowing how terrible would be the catastrophe if this were to happen, Sir Theophilus Shepstone was much alarmed about the matter, and at a meeting with the Executive Council of the Transvaal Government he pointed out to them the great danger in which the country was placed. This was done in the presence of several officers of his staff, and it was on this friendly exposition of the state of affairs that the charge that he had threatened the country with invasion by the Zulus was based. On the 11th of April, or the day before the annexation, a messenger was despatched to Cetewayo telling him of the reports that had reached Pretoria, and stating that if they were true he must forthwith give up all such intentions, as the Transvaal would at once be placed under the sovereignty of Her Majesty, and that if he had assembled any armies for purposes of aggression, they must be disbanded at once. Sir Theophilus Shepstone's message reached Zululand not a day too soon. Had the annexation of the Transvaal been delayed by a

[1] 'Last Boer War,' p. 60.

few weeks even—and this is a point which I earnestly beg Englishmen to remember in connection with that act—Cetawayo's armies would have entered the Transvaal, carrying death before them and leaving a wilderness behind them. Cetewayo's answer to the special Commissioner's message will sufficiently show, to use Sir Theophilus's own words in his despatch on the subject, 'the pinnacle of peril which the Republic and South Africa generally had reached at the moment when the annexation took place.' He says: 'I thank my father Sompseu (Sir Theophilus Shepstone) for his message. I am glad that he has sent it, because the Dutch have tired me out, and I intended to fight them once, and once only, and to drive them over the Vaal. Kabana (name of messenger), you see my impis are gathered. It was to fight the Dutch I called them together; now I will send them back to their homes. Is it well that two men (Amadoda, Amabili) should be made iziula (fools)? In the reign of my father Umpanda the Boers were constantly moving their boundary further into my country. Since his death the same thing has been done. I had, therefore, determined to end it once for all.'[1]

On April 11—that is, the day before the issue of the proclamation of annexation—Sir Theophilus Shepstone wrote to Mr. Robert Herbert, enclosing his letter under flying seal to Sir Bartle Frere:

There will be a protest against me and the annexation issued by the Government, but they will at the same time call upon the people to submit quietly pending the issue. You need not be disquieted by such action, because it is taken merely to save appearances and the members of the Government from the violence of a faction that seems for years to have held Pretoria in terror when any act of the Government displeased it.

You will better understand this when I tell you privately that the President has from the first fully acquiesced in the necessity for the change, and that most of the members of the Government have expressed themselves anxious for it; but none of them have had the courage openly to express their opinions, so I have had to act apparently against them. And this I have felt bound to do, knowing the state and danger of the country, and that three-quarters of the people will be thankful for the change when once it is made. Yesterday morning Mr. Burgers came to me to arrange how the matter should be done. I read to him the draft of my proclamation, and he proposed the altering of two words only, to which I agreed. He brought me a number of conditions, which he wished me to insert, which I have accepted and have embodied in my proclamation. He told me that he could not help issuing a protest to keep the uneasy portion of the people quiet, and you will see grounds for this precaution when I tell you that there are only half a dozen native constables to represent the power of the State in Pretoria, and a considerable number of the Boers in the neighbourhood are of the lowest and most ignorant class. Mr. Burgers read me, too, the draft of his protest, and asked me if I saw any objection to it or thought it too strong. I said that it appeared to me to pledge the people to resist by-and-by, to which he replied that it was to tide over the difficulty of the moment, seeing

[1] In this connection it should be remembered that Panda claimed to his own credit the overthrow of Dingaan, a claim for which there is more ground than the Boers are disposed to allow.

that my support (the troops) were a fortnight's march distant, and that by the time the answer to the protest came all desire of opposition would have died out. I therefore did not dissuade him from his protest.

You will see when the proclamation reaches you that I have taken high ground. Nothing but annexation will, or can, save the State, and nothing less can save South Africa from the direst consequences. All the thinking and intelligent people know this, and will be thankful to be delivered from the thraldom of petty factions by which they are perpetually kept in a state of excitement and unrest because the Government and everything connected with it is a thorough sham.

Eight days before Sir Theophilus had written to Sir Bartle:

Mr. Burgers, who had been all along, as far as his conversation and professions to me went, in full accord with me, had suddenly taken alarm. He made impossible proposals, all of which involved infinite delay, and, of course, dangerous agitation. As far as I am concerned, it is impossible for me to retreat now, come what may. If I were to leave the country, civil war would at once take place, as the natives would consider it the sunshine in which they should make hay in the Transvaal. The gold-fields are in a state of rebellion against the Transvaal Government, and they are kept from overt acts only by my warnings and entreaties.

It is true that outside the Transvaal a certain section of the English-speaking inhabitants of South Africa disapproved the annexation, as they subsequently disapproved the war with the Zulus. Their objection, however, was based, not upon sentimental or humanitarian grounds, but upon a cynical calculation which would hardly commend itself to the pro-Boers of to-day. Theirs was the spirit in which, Tacitus tells us, many Romans regarded the exportation of Jews to Sardinia and Corsica for the purpose of putting down the pirates. 'If,' said Tacitus, 'the Jews extirminated the pirates, so much the better; if, on the other hand, the Jews themselves were extirpated, *vile damnum*, it was a cheap disaster.' To this class the Boers and the Kaffirs were about equally objectionable. Every white man in South Africa was convinced that, if the paramount Power held aloof, there must sooner or later come a struggle to the death between the warrior Zulus, trained in the traditions of Dingaan and Tshaka, and the Boers of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. It seemed to them highly probable that the Zulus, if left free to act, would, in their own picturesque language, 'eat up' the white settlers between the Orange River and the country of the Matabele. In that case, no doubt, there

would be a day of reckoning between the Imperial forces and the black impis of Cetewayo; but such a struggle, though it might be bloody and costly, could have but one end, and when that came, there would be a clean slate[1] up to the Zambesi, or further, on which we could map South Africa anew to our own purpose and liking. The policy would have been far less difficult and less expensive than that which was adopted. But few Englishmen, then or now, would have subscribed it. Had the elder Pitt foreseen that the eviction of the French from Canada would lead, as Montcalm prophesied that it would, and as it did, to the loss of the North American colonies, he would not have stayed his hand; and the consequences of leaving North America to be the cockpit of a conflict *à outrance* between the two white races which then inhabited it, with savage tribes on the one side and on the other, would have been far less disastrous to humanity than the choice of a policy of masterly inactivity in the case of South Africa. And yet it is quite clear that one or other of these courses of action must have been taken.

Besides these imperative motives for annexation, there was one which is alluded to in a letter by Sir Bartle Frere to Mr. J. M. Maclean on April 22, 1881. It cannot be exhaustively treated until the time has come for the publication of confidential documents. But its nature is sufficiently indicated in Frere's words:

> 'There was another reason for Shepstone's act of annexation. The burghers had sought alliances with Continental Powers—the Germans, Belgians, and Portuguese—and Shepstone had no reason to doubt that, if England declined to interfere, Germany would be induced to undertake the protection of the Transvaal, which would have added infinitely to our troubles in South Africa.'

I must add that if, as is constantly alleged, Shepstone's action was premature, it can be safely said that the Boers profited and we lost by his precipitation. It can hardly be pretended that in 1877 British policy was actuated by mercenary

[1] This metaphor was used a year before it became the bore it is to-day.

motives, for, apparently, all we had to gain was a revenue of £40,000, which existed chiefly on paper, with a parcel of gold-mines, in which none but a few enthusiasts had any belief.[1] I have quoted the official justification for the annexation, together with President Burgers' admission of the accuracy of that justification, and I here content myself with adding that, whatever opinions may be formed of Burgers' capacity or insight, he was practically the unanimous choice of the adult Transvaal.

I proceed to give the opinion of Mr. Anthony Trollope, formed on the spot, after the annexation and before South Africa had taken to protesting. He was admittedly a man of great powers of observation, and many very competent critics hold that as a novelist he has not won the place in English letters to which his knowledge of human nature and affairs entitled him. Be that as it may, his position and his political convictions, such as they were, made him an impartial judge. He had no axe to grind in South Africa. He went there out of curiosity, and to complete the tale of his expeditions in the British Empire. He had the real Whig mind, and was certainly not predisposed to approve a policy offhand because it had been adopted by the Cabinet of Lord Beaconsfield. What he rightly regarded as a misfortune, the fact that he never met Sir Theophilus Shepstone, adds weight to his testimony as an unbiassed witness. Here is what he says:[2]

Sir Theophilus, after a sojourn of ten weeks at Pretoria, in which the question of the annexation was submitted to the Volksraad, and in which petitions and counter-petitions were signed, did annex the whole of the country permanently, without any question of provisional occupation, and without, as far as I have been able to learn, any sanction from the Governor of the Cape Colony. . . . Was ever anything so decided, so audacious, and apparently so opposed to the spirit of the instructions which the Commissioner had received? When the Secretary of State received the telegram from Madeira, the nearest telegraph-station, saying that the Transvaal had been annexed, which he did in the following May, he surely must have been more surprised than any other man in England at what had been done.[3]

Was the deed justifiable? Has it been justified by what has occurred since? And if so, how had come about a state of things which had made

[1] The total amount of gold extracted from the Transvaal up to the date of annexation was £47,538.

[2] 'South Africa,' ii. 55 *et seq.*

[3] 'Lord Carnarvon accepted it and ratified it, though he seems to have been quite as much startled by its sudden conclusion as Frere was' (Martineau, 'The Transvaal Trouble,' p. 22).

necessary a proceeding apparently so outrageous? The only man I have met in all South Africa who has questioned the propriety of what has been done is Mr. Burgers, the ousted President. Though I have discussed the matter wherever I have been—taking generally something of a slant against Sir Theophilus—as I must seem to have done in the remarks I have just made, and to which I always felt myself prompted by the high-handedness of the proceeding—I have never encountered even a doubtful word on the subject, except in what Mr. Burgers said to me. And Mr. Burgers acknowledged to me, not once or twice only, that the step which had been taken was manifestly beneficial to the natives, to the English—and to the Dutch. He thought that Sir Theophilus had done a great wrong, but that the wrong done would be of great advantage to everyone concerned. He made various complaints: that the natives around him had been encouraged to rebel, in order that an assumed difficulty might be pleaded; that no national petition, and, indeed, no trustworthy petition, had been sent forward praying for annexation; that the deed was uncalled for and tyrannical; and that the whole proceeding was one in which the courtesy due to a weaker nation was neglected and omitted. He then asserted that fresh emigrants would not flock into a land governed under a European crown as they would have done into a republic. He repeated his admission that for Dutchmen, Englishmen, and natives as at present settled in the country the British rule would be the best.

He alleged, as to himself, that, when Sir Theophilus stated to him his intentions, three courses appeared to him to be open to him. He might use his influence and his words in assisting the transference of the country to the British. This, as President of the Republic, he could not do, and the less so as he did not think that it should be done. Or he might cause Sir Theophilus and his twenty-five policemen to be marched back over the border, treating them on their way as unauthorized intruders. This he would not do, he said, because he knew it would be useless to wage war with Great Britain. Or he might yield and remonstrate—yield to power, while he remonstrated against injustice. This he said that he did do. The words and personal bearing of the man recommended themselves to me much. Whether he is to be regarded as a banished patriot or a willing placeman must depend on a delicate question, which has not, so far as I know, yet been answered, though it has been broached—to which, delicate as it is, I will refer again before I have ended my story.[1]

I had not the pleasure of meeting Sir Theophilus, and have the less repugnance, therefore, to surmise the condition of his mind when he received the order to go to Pretoria. Had he told me his mind, I might have been unable to publish my own surmises. He knew that the native races of the Transvaal, unless convinced of the superiority of their white neighbours, would ever struggle to prove them inferior—and that such inferiority, if proved, would at once be their death-warrant. The natives had long learned to respect the English and to hate the Dutch;[2] but even that respect would not restrain them, if once they had asserted their masterhood to a white race. And now this state of things was at hand. He was aware that, though English troops could be supplied to maintain

[1] The pension of £750 per annum given to Mr. Burgers by the British Government in compensation for his loss of salary as President, and for the ruin which his disinterested, though very mad, extravagance in the interests of his country had involved him.

[2] See incidentally Count Sternberg's 'My Experiences of the Boer War,' p. 180: 'We passed (as prisoners) camp after camp and the river, being laughed at and ridiculed by the Kaffirs.'

English authority, English troops would not be lent to fight the battles of the Dutch. There might—nay, there probably would—be a native triumph just across our borders, which he as a Minister in Natal (Shepstone was Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal) could not interfere to quell, but which, when a rumour of it should spread among the Zulus of our border, might induce 300,000 coloured subjects to think that they could free themselves by a blow from 20,000 white masters. And he knew the condition which I have attempted to explain—that these Dutch people in the Transvaal would not pay a stiver of tax, that there was, in fact, no government, that the gaols were unlocked in order that prisoners might find elsewhere the bread which their gaolers could not get for them, that the posts could not be continued because the contractors were not paid, that no one would part with a coin which he possessed, that property was unsaleable, that industry was unprofitable, that life was insecure, that chaos was come upon the land. I do not suppose that Sir Theophilus doubted much when he read the Commission which had been sent to him, or that he thought very much of all the safeguards and provisions. He probably felt, as did everybody else, that the South African Republic had from the first been a failure—almost a farce—and that the sooner so expensive a failure could be brought to an end the better. If, indeed, the Volksraad would have voted their own extermination, that would have been very well; but he could hardly have expected it. As for petitions and the wish of a 'sufficient number' of the inhabitants—I should imagine that he must have been a little indifferent to that. His mind probably was made up—with a resolve to give the Volksraad what time might be needed for their deliberations. They did not deliberate—only deliberated whether they would deliberate or not, and then declined even to deliberate. Whereupon Sir Theophilus said that then and from thenceforth the Transvaal should be British property. So he put up the Queen's flag; and the Transvaal is, and probably will remain, British property.

I have to acknowledge, with all my sympathies strongly opposed to what I call high-handed political operations, that I think Sir Theophilus was justified. A case of such a kind must in truth be governed by its own merits, and cannot be subjected to fixed rule. To have annexed only a part of the Transvaal would have been not only useless, but absurd. Not only would the part which we had spared have been hostile to us, but the Dutch within our assumed borders would have envied the independence we had left to others. We shall have trouble enough now in settling our boundaries with the natives. We should then have had the worse trouble of settling them with the Dutch. To have waited for authority from the Government of the Cape Colony would have shown a weakness in his own authority, which might have been fatal to Sir Theophilus, as he was then placed. No other Governor could know the condition of the matter as well as he did. To get the authority needed, he must have wasted six weeks, during which it would have been known to every member of the Volksraad that he was waiting. To carry him through, it was needed that the Boers should understand that, when he said that the land should be annexed, Great Britain was saying so. They did so believe. The President so believed. And therefore the surrender was made without a struggle.

Much reliance is placed upon the protest issued by Mr. Burgers on the eve of the issue of Shepstone's proclamation:

Whereas I am not strong enough to draw the sword for the successful defence of the independence of this State against a superior Power like that of England; and, moreover, with a view to the welfare of all South Africa, I am altogether disinclined to bring its white inhabitants into a disastrous complication of warfare by any hostile proceedings on my part before having tried first of all every means to secure the rights of the people in a peaceable manner; therefore, in the name and by the authority of the Government and people of the South African Republic, I hereby make my solemn protest against the intended annexation.

We have it, on the authority of Sir Theophilus himself, that this formality of a protest had been arranged by President Burgers as an *oogen verblinding:* he had informed the Administrator of his intention. This statement does not rest entirely upon Shepstone's authority. A month before the issue of his proclamation a series[1] of ten questions was submitted to him, by the Secretary of State, in the name of the President. The queries imply acceptance of the principle of annexation. The first, for instance, asked if the Transvaal could 'remain a separate State, retaining its autonomy with the legislature elected by the people.' To which it was answered:

> 'The Transvaal will remain a separate State in the sense that it will become a separate British colony with its own laws and legislature. It is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that the Transvaal should enjoy the fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the country and the intelligence of its people. But much must of necessity depend on the manner and spirit in which Her Majesty's benevolent intentions are received.'

And on April 10—that is, on the very day preceding the issue of his protest—Mr. Burgers handed Sir Theophilus a document proposing amendments to four, and adopting without reserve six, of the answers to the questions submitted to him on March 13. The four amendments really contained nothing which vitally affected the principles laid down in Shepstone's proclamation, and in his answers to the questions propounded to him. With regard to No. 1, which I have already cited, Mr. Burgers' alternative reads as follows: 'The Transvaal shall remain a separate, distinct whole, retaining its autonomy with

[1] C. 1883, pp. 5, 6.

legislature elected solely by the people.' The second question was: 'Will the Dutch language remain the official language?' To which Sir Theophilus answered:

> 'Arrangements will be made by which the Dutch language will practically be as much the official language as the English. In the legislative assembly members may, as they do now, use either language, and in the law-courts the same may be done at the option of both suitors to a cause. All laws, proclamations, and Government notices to be published in the Dutch language.'

For this Mr. Burgers would fain have substituted an assurance that

> 'the Dutch language shall remain the official language of the country until such time when the legislature shall have made other provision. All laws, proclamations, Government notices, to be published in English and Dutch.'

The fifth question ran:

> 'Will all obligations of the State, as defined in treaties with foreign Powers, and contracts and concessions to companies and individuals, and the construction of the Delagoa Bay Railway, be maintained?'

And this was the Commissioner's answer:

> 'Being unaware of the nature of the treaties which subsist between this State and foreign Powers, or of the terms of the contracts with and concessions to companies and individuals, it is impossible to say more than that all *bona-fide* concessions and contracts, which are not prejudicial to the interests of the country, will be maintained, and the treaty arrangements with foreign Powers will have to be considered with reference to the altered circumstances of the country. The Delagoa Railway is a question which appears to be at present under the consideration of the contractors, and must be decided upon with reference to the pending negotiations, it being understood that the interests of the country demand every exertion to be made to secure its construction.'

This was adopted by Mr. Burgers, subject to the rider:

> 'All contracts entered into on the part of this Government with the Portuguese Government and the Lebombo Company, with regard to the railway-line and the extension thereto, shall be respected and carried out.'

The one other alteration was with regard to Question 8, which was adopted by Mr. Burgers subject to the omission of certain words not specified in the despatch. The question was: 'Will all private rights to property be respected?' The answer was:

> 'All private *bonâ-fide* rights to property guaranteed by the existing laws of the State, and sanctioned by them, will be respected, except, of course, in cases where the owners of such property offer, or induce others to offer, seditious opposition to Her Majesty's Government. In this, as in all newly-settled countries, there are, however, questions of right to land which cannot be brought under the operation of any general principle, and which can therefore be decided only on their special merits.'

Nothing, then, can be clearer than that President Burgers had accepted, without qualification, the principle of annexation, and, as he was entitled to do, struggled to make the best terms for his subjects.

Sir Bartle Frere, who, though he had been only a very short time in South Africa, saw further into its problems than many life-long residents, anticipated the effect which the annexation would produce upon the Dutch colonists. He wrote at once to Lord Carnarvon:

> I have already seen enough to be sure it will require great care to prevent the whole Dutch section of the population feeling deeply on the subject. None of them seemed to realize, as I had expected, that it was quite impossible for the Transvaal to go on any longer as it has been doing for the last two years, and that if they were cordially to adopt what you had offered, they might obtain more security for reasonable self-government than they or their forefathers ever hoped for.

On May 15, 1877—that is, within a month of the annexation—he wrote again:

> Our news from the Transvaal continues very favourable, and I think even Burgers' friends here see that opposition or protest is useless.

They still argue that the annexation requires the confirmation of the Volksraad to give it legal validity; but they confess that if Shepstone were to summon a fresh Volksraad, elected to decide between the annexation and return of Mr. Burgers' Republic, a great majority would prefer annexation.

A week later he wrote thus:

There can be no doubt that the annexation of the Transvaal has materially altered the position of all parties, if parties they can be called, with regard to confederation. It has immensely strengthened the position of all who desire confederation by making it more of an absolute certainty and necessity than it was before.

But it has at the same time startled and alarmed both classes of the Dutch, the Afrikanders and Neologians, who sympathized with Burgers in his dream of a great anti-English South Africa.[1] These men see an end of their dreams. It has had a similar effect, for a time only, and in a similar degree, on the old orthodox Dutch party, who are not really more anti-English than French Canadians or Welsh farmers; that is to say, they do not love our nation, its language, or its busy, bustling, exact ways, but they are really loyal to the Government, and are as faithful subjects as the Queen possesses. They have a vague kind of sympathetic regret for the extinction of anything that calls itself Dutch, and they have an opinion that the annexation of the Transvaal will disturb the existing equilibrium in the western provinces, which seems to be the Dutch farmers' idea of the political millennium.

As for the Cape Ministers, Mr. Molteno's rather parochial view of the functions and limitations of a responsible self-government was still in the ascendant. The annexation of the Transvaal was a matter which, on every ground—political, social, and economic—was of the greatest moment to the Cape Colony. The speech in which the Governor opens a Colonial Parliament is drafted by Ministers, and submitted to him for approval; and Sir Bartle Frere was naturally anxious that an event of so vast an import should find a proper recognition in it. Mr. Molteno, however, replied that, though he and his colleagues had not the least wish to impede or ignore the act of annexation, they did not wish to be supposed to have had anything to do with it.

Of course, it is very possible that the outward apathy displayed by the Cape Colony Dutch with regard to the annexation was real. In no part of Her Majesty's dominions,

[1] It is interesting to remember that the pro-Boers in South Africa and at home have denied the existence of any such dream, and have declared it to be a figment of the imagination of capitalists who did not even exist in South Africa until ten years after this reference to Burgers' dream in Sir Bartle Frere's despatch.

not even in Ireland, was clerical influence more potent than it was in South Africa. The Dutch Reformed Church, which owed allegiance to no external authority, was intensely and narrowly patriotic, and there can be no doubt that its ministers kept alive the Afrikander spirit when, but for their influence, the two white races would presently have merged in one, having the same political aspirations and speaking the same language. But Burgers, it must be remembered, was a heretic, and so long as British annexation of the Transvaal involved the downfall of one whom the Synod of the Dutch Church had unsuccessfully attempted to expel, the defeat of heterodoxy was more gratifying to ecclesiasticism than the rebuke to patriotism was mortifying. Circumstances were changed when Mr. Kruger, who was Burgers' rival for the presidency, though he had promised him his support, became the representative of Boer recalcitrancy. He belonged to that Dopper section of the Dutch Reformed Church whose orthodoxy, though unspeakably narrow and fanatical, was ever beyond impeachment, and the sympathy of the Cape Colony Dutch, which was denied to the latitudinarian Burgers, was freely given to the strait precisian, Kruger. Associated with him in the embryonic anti-English agitation was Dr. Jorissen, who had been a minister, was still a Doctor of Divinity, and was acting Attorney-General in the late Republic. He, it is needless to say, was a Hollander, as was Mr. Bok, acting-secretary to the deputation to Lord Carnarvon.

It is often asserted that the opposition to annexation was based entirely upon the neglect of the British authorities to fulfil the pledges given by Sir Theophilus Shepstone; but the assertion, like many others in South African history, was a manifest afterthought. It is true that there was an unfortunate delay in the work of reorganization. Some part, not a large one, of the blame may rest upon the shoulders of Sir Theophilus, who in training and habit was Afrikander enough to prefer a very leisurely and deliberate rate of progress before all others; but the chief cause of the postponement of reforms, which was always regretted by Sir Bartle Frere, was the necessity of coping with the Black Peril, which had its origin in the weakness of the Republican Government.

The subjugation of Cetewayo's nation in arms was far tougher work than anyone had anticipated. It was finally undertaken as much in the interests of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State as of the Cape Colony and Natal, and it is characteristic of the Boers that they should have made capital out of the delay necessitated by their own imminent danger, and that they should have taken advantage of embarrassments, incurred mainly on their behalf, to thwart the policy of those who had saved them from extermination. Be this as it may, however, it cannot be pretended that British procrastination was the cause of the European mission undertaken by Messrs. Kruger and Jorrisen. The annexation, as we know, took place on April 12, and in less than a month the two delegates left Pretoria. Sir Theophilus Shepstone's account to Lord Carnarvon of their departure is instructive in many ways; it is dated May 14, 1877:[1]

The cost of the mission was to have been defrayed by voluntary subscriptions of the people of the Transvaal, and £2,000 was the amount which it was estimated would be necessary. Of this, all that could be raised up to the date of the departure of the deputation was less than £1,000. Mr. Kruger told me that he expected to receive help on his way to the Cape from the inhabitants of the Orange Free State, and I have no doubt that the mission will be much more liberally supported by the people of that State and the Cape Colony than by the people more immediately concerned in the Transvaal. . . . Mr. Kruger is a member of the Executive Council, from which he receives £200 a year, but holds no executive office. Dr. Jorissen is a Doctor of Divinity, but nevertheless occupied the position of State Attorney or Attorney-General in the late Republic, with £600 a year salary; he requested to be allowed to retain his office under the altered form of government in the terms of my proclamation, and that he might return to it on his coming back from Europe. Both these gentlemen told me they were going to Europe to discharge an obligation which had been imposed upon them, and that if their mission failed they would at least have done their duty; and Mr. Kruger added, with a frankness that has always characterized his intercourse with me, that in case of failure I should find him as faithful a subject under the new form of government as he had been under the old. Dr. Jorissen, with equal frankness, admits that the change was inevitable, and expresses his belief that the cancelling of it would be calamitous. It had been arranged that both these gentlemen should receive full pay during their absence, which they themselves tell me will not exceed eight or nine months. I have not interfered with this arrangement.

As the delegates anticipated, they received considerable financial assistance in the Orange Free State and Cape

[1] C. 1883, p. 9.

Colony. But a petition to Her Majesty, bearing date May 23, 1877, from members of the Volksraad, land-owners, and inhabitants of the Transvaal, makes plain the fact that the missioners represented only a small minority in the Transvaal; that the full import of Shepstone's mission was known long ere his proclamation was read; that the plea of coercion cannot be maintained, as no armed force entered the country until after the annexation, and there was no attempt to oppose the small one that did afterwards arrive; and that sympathy for the loss of 'independence' (so-called), and overt opposition to the annexation, emanated not from those directly interested, but from the Cape and neighbouring colonies—a piece of interference utterly repudiated by the signatories.

Amongst these were seven members of the late Volksraad, including the Postmaster-General, who was a member of the Executive Council; Mr. Keogh, the Public Prosecutor; the Treasurer-General, and others. As for the petition which Messrs Kruger and Jorissen took with them, Sir Bartle wrote thus to Lord Carnarvon, June 25, 1877:[1]

When I had the pleasure yesterday of seeing Mr. Burgers, his friend Mr. Philip Watermeyer, who was kind enough to accompany him, asked him, without any suggestion from me, whether the signatures appended to the petitions which Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen took home were not affixed to petitions presented to the Volksraad against an entirely different scheme of confederation, and whether they were not received by the Volksraad sometime before the annexation. Mr. Burgers' reply did not throw any doubt on the accuracy of Mr. Watermeyer's statement, nor did he question the justice of Mr. Watermeyer's subsequent remark, that the time which elapsed between the proclamation of annexation and the departure of Messrs. Kruger and Jorrisen for England rendered the signature of petitions against the annexation by any large proportion of the burgher population a physical impossibility.

On June 4 Messrs. Kruger and Jorrisen had an interview with Sir Bartle at Cape Town, in reporting which to the Secretary of State the High Commissioner wrote thus:[2]

Dr. Jorissen said he was a member of the late Executive Government, who had been employed by the Volksraad to resist annexation to the utmost. A protest had in consequence been issued, and was 'necessary to prevent war.' He then corrected himself by saying: 'Or at least bloodshed, for there would certainly have been bloodshed had not the protest been issued.' I inquired how this appeared. At the time of the annexation proclamation Sir Theophilus was unsupported by any, even

[1] C. 1883, p. 27. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

the smallest armed force in his neighbourhood, and, had not the annexation been fully acquiesced in by the inhabitants, he had no means at hand (even if he had the wish) to coerce them. Was I to understand that the blood shed would have been that of Sir Theophilus or his suite? Dr. Jorissen said: 'Certainly not, but the issue of the protest had certainly disarmed irritation.'

And later Sir Bartle Frere wrote to Lord Carnarvon:[1]

I have read many letters and have conversed with several members of the Cape Legislature and others who have lately come from the Transvaal and intervening districts, men of weight and intelligence, personally deeply interested in the prosperity of the Transvaal as well as of the colony, and intimately acquainted with the feelings of the Dutch-speaking population. They all assure me that even among the latter class, often the relatives and intimate friends of the Transvaal Boers, there is little feeling of regret save for the necessity for the change, and no disposition whatever to revert to the former state of things; on the contrary, I am assured by several persons of undoubted authority that most of their Dutch-speaking acquaintances in our eastern districts express to them undisguised satisfaction at what has occurred, coupled occasionally with the expression of a wish that now law and order were restored, they might themselves be able to migrate to the Transvaal and join their friends and fellow-countrymen there who had so long been suffering from anarchy and disorder.

What passed between the Secretary of State and the delegates may be gathered from the minute which Lord Carnarvon[2] addressed to Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen:

I desire (he says) in the first place to express the personal satisfaction with which I have received yourselves and the representatives of that section of the inhabitants of the Transvaal in whose name you have come to make certain representations to Her Majesty's Government. As you are aware, I have not been of the opinion that there has been any room for discussion of the question whether it was right or expedient that the Transvaal should become British territory.

It is quite clear that Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen had come to England with no hope, and perhaps with no wish, to annul the annexation, and the utmost that they demanded was that a plebiscite should be taken on the subject, as to which,

> 'Not only is it impossible,' says Lord Carnarvon, 'for me to allow the act done in the name of the Queen by her fully authorized officers to be now questioned, but if this were possible, I should consider it in the highest degree inexpedient to place on record that an extremely small minority of the community, as I

[1] C. 1883, p. 15.

[2] August 18, 1877.

believe you agree with me in estimating it to be, is opposed to an acceptance of the Queen's rule.'

More remarkable even than this assertion of Lord Carnarvon's as to the number of those opposed to annexation (which must have been derived, at least in part, from his conversations with the delegates) is their very perfunctory demur.

Although (they say) we may have, perhaps, a different idea as to the number of inhabitants of the Transvaal who should have preferred independence to the acceptance of Her Majesty's sovereignty, we think it quite useless, after your Lordship's decision, to dwell any longer upon this matter.

They (Kruger and Jorissen) were more anxious to secure favourable terms for the Queen's new subjects than to prevent them from being subjects at all. They pressed upon the Secretary of State the desirability of retaining the Dutch language on the same footing as the English, and were particularly anxious to know what share of the Customs revenues at the ports of Natal and Cape Colony would be allotted to the Transvaal. On these points Lord Carnarvon gave them the most satisfactory assurances, as also with regard to the development of railway and telegraph communications. Messrs Kruger and Jorissen professed such an interest in education as had been displayed by no politician in the Transvaal saving ex-President Burgers. In this connection it may be interesting to quote from one of the numerous addresses presented to Sir Theophilus Shepstone during his progress through the country, on which, by the way, he was escorted by only forty mounted men:

The inhabitants of Lydenburg said, This district is at present educationally in a most lamentable condition. There are literally no boys' schools of any description in this town, and, with the exception of one or two private schools, there are no educational establishments for either boys or girls in this immense district. Want of education here, as elsewhere, leads, and has led, to widespread demoralization. The evil it has wrought in the past can hardly be exaggerated, and there can be little hope of raising the intelligence of the general population unless the Government speedily inaugurates and steadily sets itself to encourage an extensive, thorough, and practical educational scheme. Such cannot originate from the people. Long isolation from highly-civilized influence has weakened their appreciation of anything beyond the most necessary and rudimentary branches of education.[1]

[1] C. 1961, p. 90.

On November 16, 1877,[1] Lord Carnarvon summarized to Sir Theophilus Shepstone the impressions left by his interview with Messrs. Kruger and Jorrisen:

I have the honour to inform you that, previous to their departure from this country, I had a farewell interview with the Transvaal delegates, Dr. Jorissen and Mr. Paul Kruger, which was of a most satisfactory character. In the course of conversation, these gentlemen expressed themselves with perfect frankness as to the original objects of the mission which they had undertaken, and the wish they had entertained that it might prove successful. They were, however, fully alive to the fact that considerations of policy rendered it impossible for my decision to be other than irrevocable, and were entirely satisfied with the assurances I had given them that the best interests of the Transvaal should always receive my fullest consideration. They further assured me of their determination to use their best endeavours to induce their fellow-countrymen to accept cheerfully the present state of things, and of their desire, should they be permitted to do so, to serve Her Majesty faithfully in any capacity for which they might be judged eligible. . . . I feel satisfied that I can rely on the sincerity of these promises, and I shall be glad if you feel yourself in a position to offer either their present or other suitable positions under your Government to these gentlemen. Mr. Bok also impressed me very favourably, and gave me every satisfaction in the discharge of his responsible and somewhat difficult duty, and I shall be pleased to learn that you have found means of employing him.

It has been the fashion to argue that Lord Carnarvon deceived the country (not, of course, intentionally) as to the spirit in which the annexation was received by the Transvaalers. All that need be said on this subject, after the copious extracts which I have given, is that, if any deception there were, it was practised upon Lord Carnarvon by Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen, and on Sir Theophilus Shepstone by the inhabitants of all the principal towns and districts of the Transvaal through which he and his meagre escort passed. This 'slimness' makes it a fair inference that the Boers, under all their protestations of loyalty and their loud-mouthed acceptance of the new state of things, were already preparing for rebellion. In my next chapter, however, I shall give what seems to me conclusive proof that the revolt against the Queen's authority was instigated largely from the Cape Colony, and that at the time of annexation there was a genuine sense of relief at the escape from the very real dangers and difficulties with which the Transvaal was threatened. In the blue-books is an address from Pretoria

[1] C. 1961, p. 140.

to Lord Carnarvon on his retirement from Lord Beaconsfield's Government. It is valuable for two reasons: first, because the signatories could have hoped for no favours to come from a retiring Minister; and, secondly, because it was drawn up when the agitation against British rule had begun to be flamboyant and militant (March 15, 1878):

We are, as your Lordship is aware, a mixed people, occupying a territory which contains a large majority of the descendants of the old French and Dutch emigrants, and surrounded by Kaffirs more or less friendly or unfriendly, and whose power has lately been rapidly on the increase in consequence of possessing arms and ammunition, obtained by them chiefly at the diamond-fields. The majority of the white inhabitants are of Republican habits of thought, the natural result of their progenitors' nomadic existence, and their aspirations, consequently, are for a rule in which they have some voice, and we have long felt that your Lordship's scheme for confederating all the States, so called, of South Africa, giving to each a separate local government, would have met, and still will meet, the wishes of nearly all parties. If for one object alone—apart from the important interchange of commercial relations—the mutual defence against the growing power of the native, this idea of confederation would seem to be the right solution of the problem of peace and prosperity for South Africa.

I will add one more quotation from Shepstone's letter to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (May, 1878) who had succeeded Lord Carnarvon at the Colonial Office.

There are many persons in the Transvaal, mostly adventurers, superior in intelligence and education to the general population, and many in the adjoining and neighbouring territories, who, some from political, others from personal motives, made the most of the opportunity afforded by this excitement[1] to create disaffection among the Boers, and to goad them on, if possible, to the commission of acts of open violence against the Government. The Boers had either forgotten, or had never many of them comprehended, the gravity of the position in which the late Republic stood before the annexation. They were at the time suddenly relieved by that measure from a sense of responsibility that pressed heavily upon them, but were in some cases unwilling, in others, perhaps, unable, to refer the relief to its true cause. Then, again, their pride was continually offended by the taunt that their country had been taken from them by an 'elderly gentleman, accompanied by only twenty-five men,' and that they had not struck a blow to save it. Added to these considerations is the traditional but deeply-rooted hatred of the English name, which still exists in many families in the Transvaal,[2] and there is also the practical unrestraint of twenty-five years.

[1] The return of Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen.

[2] 'The Boer population of the Transvaal consists of about thirty vast families, and even these are for the most part connected by intermarriage. It will not require much consideration to show the effect upon voting which such a state of things must produce' (Shepstone to Sir M. Hicks-Beach).

With the agitation by which the rebellion and its sequel were made possible, I shall deal in my next chapter.

A word here as to Frere's position. In the circumstances, it was not surprising that the Colonial Executive should regard the Governor sent to represent the Queen as a kind of figure-head, whose functions were to dispense hospitality and to supply the deficiencies of Ministers on questions of etiquette and precedent. But the Governor of Cape Colony was vastly more than the representative of the Queen as a constitutional monarch guided by the advice of Ministers; he was also the local agent of the Imperial policy of the British Government, and the authority conferred on him by which he acted was the authority of the British Parliament. In the former capacity, since the grant of responsible government, he is supposed to act solely upon the advice of his Ministers; while in his capacity as High Commissioner his duty is to protect and safeguard the rights and interests of Great Britain in the whole sub-continent. So long as the Cape Colony comprised within its sphere of influence all British interests in South Africa, and until responsible government was adopted, this doubling of the parts involved no serious inconvenience. The framers of the Constitution of 1872, however, appear to have overlooked consequences which were not only possible, but inevitable. The result may best be illustrated by an entry in Sir Bartle Frere's diary, in which he records the fact that, as Governor of Cape Colony, acting on the advice of his responsible Ministers, he gave his assent to a certain course of action at noon, which, as High Commissioner, he felt bound to veto at four o'clock. The incongruity of this dual system was intensified by the fact that, while the salary of the Governor was paid by the Cape Colony, that of the High Commissioner was defrayed from the Consolidated Fund. No harm was done so long as the Queen's representative effaced himself, and was content, as the most of Sir Bartle's representatives had been, with playing the part of a *roi fainéant;* and very shortly after Frere's arrival at the Cape he was informed by his Attorney-General that his position was virtually a sinecure, and that he had little else to do than ratify the decisions of the Cabinet, of which he was the

ex-officio President. But such a restriction of the High Commissioner's Imperial authority was certainly not contemplated by the Government at home, and it is quite clear, both from the selection of so distinguished a public servant as Sir Bartle Frere, and from the terms in which the offer of the post was conveyed to him, that he was in no wise meant to be a mere King Log.

My hope is (wrote Lord Carnarvon[1]) to induce you to accept the difficult and responsible, but, as I believe, the most important, task of undertaking the government of the Cape, which becomes vacant on December 31, nominally as Governor, but really as the statesman, who seems to me most acceptable to carry my scheme of federation into effect, and whose long administrative experience and personal character give me the best chances of success. . . . I will only add that if, after having done this great work, you feel yourself able to stay on for two or three years to bring the new machine into working order, as the first Governor-General of the South African Dominion, I shall hail the decision both on personal and on public grounds.

And to this Frere replied:[2]

I should not have cared for the ordinary current duties of Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, but a special duty I should look on in a different light, and there are few things which I should personally like better than to be associated in any way with such a great policy as yours in South Africa, entering as I do into the Imperial importance of your masterly scheme, and being deeply interested personally from old Indian and African associations in such work.

As for Mr. Molteno and his colleagues, it may be that they recognised that, under any scheme of confederation, the Cape Colony and its Government would occupy a different position from that it held as the sole possessor of autonomy in South Africa. It is not in human nature that men new-gifted with authority voluntarily abdicate their position, even in the interest of that great whole of which they are a part. Responsible government was the gift of Lord Kimberley; Lord Carnarvon spoke for a government which had turned out Mr. Gladstone and displaced Lord Kimberley. The Cape Ministry might, therefore, not unnaturally suspect that one issue of the change would be the modification of their own functions. The Froude mission, and the eccentric conceptions the historian formed of his duties, either intensified this suspicion or called it into being.

[1] October 13, 1876. [2] October 18, 1876.

In any case, the circumstances themselves must have provoked a conflict between the High Commissioner and his Ministers, unless one or other were prepared to abdicate no unimportant portion of their rights. Already the Molteno Cabinet had objected very strongly to what it described as the dictatorial methods of Lord Carnarvon; for his Lordship, in truth, had actually gone so far as to insist upon the publication of his despatch concerning confederation before the Ministry had expressed an opinion on the subject. Mr. Molteno and his colleagues, whether wilfully or not, ignored the fact that confederation did not concern the Cape Colony alone, but was a matter of the deepest interest to all the States and dependencies of South Africa. The fallacy was, however, that, because Cape Colony was emphatically *the* colony—with the longest history, the greatest geographical area, and the largest population—it was entitled to formulate a policy for all South Africa. That fallacy has continued to the present day. The Langalibalele affair, which owed its notoriety chiefly to the mischievous action of Dr. Colenso, had already produced friction between the Imperial and colonial authorities. As I am endeavouring to keep the Native Question, except in so far as it affects the conflict of the two white races, outside my argument, I purpose not to enter upon this controversy. My own opinion is that Mr. Molteno was right and Lord Carnarvon wrong; but the real importance of the dispute consisted in the fact that it showed that Downing Street and Cape Town were at issue as to the limits of their respective authorities.

Then the friction was heightened by the fact that the Molteno Ministry was in the first flush of its enjoyment of full constitutional powers; so that, even with a trained, experienced statesman in the Premier's chair, it is hard to see how, the bearings of the new machinery being still to adjust, bitterness could have been avoided. Mr. Molteno, however, though an intelligent and worthy man enough with the interests of the Cape Colony (as he conceived them) at heart, was in no sense of the word a statesman. He was Premier in virtue of his part in the struggle for self-government. There was all the difference in the world

between the colonial autonomy of Mr. Rhodes and the colonial autonomy desiderated of the Cape Colony. With Mr. Rhodes it was a stepping-stone to Imperial federation, a link of devolution in the chain of evolution. Mr. Molteno and his men, though they were sensible of the great advantages included in Imperial protection, regarded the question from the colonial point of view to the exclusion of all other considerations. Of Italian extraction, Molteno was essentially an Afrikander. So cautious and so fearful of committing himself was he that he would never put in writing what could be conveyed by word of mouth, and on more than one critical occasion he would have no record taken of important interviews between himself and the Governor. He limited his field of vision to the boundaries of the colony, and, as we have seen, he would fain have ignored all such conspicuous business as the annexation of the Transvaal, together with which contingencies might arise from the defencelessness of the British South African coast-line, and the existence in South Africa of vast tracts which any undesirable foreigner might occupy that would. All such matters, if he thought about them at all, he held to be matters of Imperial concern. They lay outside the purview of a responsible colonial Minister.[1] With the exception of Mr. de Villiers, soon to resign at thirty-one the attorney-generalship for the post of Chief Justice, there was no man of first-class ability in Molteno's Cabinet. He was, however, shortly to be joined by one who had been his bitterest opponent, and whose favourite amusement, until he was invited to join the Ministry, was that of 'twisting the tail of the lion of Beaufort.' Mr. Merriman was not an element of stability in the Cabinet. At a comparatively early age he had earned himself a reputation as a political weathercock, and, as Hofmeyr said of him long after, he was even now like a reed in the vlei.

The trial of strength between the Molteno Ministry and

[1] For instance, it was only when Frere asserted that, in the absence of any definite advice from his Cabinet, he might have to instruct Shepstone or Lanyon to assert a protectorate over Walfisch Bay, that, as he was entering his carriage on his way to the Eastern Provinces, Molteno begged him to run up the British flag.

the Governor had its origin in one of those Kaffir wars which, until Frere took the whole Native Question in hand, have troubled South Africa since the first days of our occupation. With that constitutional struggle I do not propose to deal at length. There is, however, one incident which, in view of recent events, is most significant. Broadly speaking, the great point of conflict between the Imperial and the Afrikander views of the right South African policy is the distinction between blacks and whites. The position of the Imperial Government is that the distinction should only be such as is warranted by differences in civilization. Such questions, for instance, as the franchise, service on juries, or the duties which involve advanced intelligence and what may be called 'traditional education,' are open questions; that is to say, while colour is to be no bar to the enjoyment of these privileges, the fitness of classes or individuals for their acquisition must be determined by a great variety of considerations. But with regard to questions affecting life, property, and liberty, colour makes no difference. In theory, the Afrikanders have not disputed this latter proposition, nor have they taken exception to the axiom that all men—black and white—are equal before the law; but in practice there is no such equality. At the moment of writing, Dutch Afrikander opinion has been greatly excited by the punishment meted out to such Cape Colonists as wantonly took up arms against the Imperial Government, and it is held that for men taken with arms in their hands, fighting against the soldiers of the Crown, so very mild a penalty as that of disfranchisement is excessive. Let us see how the Dutch Afrikander regarded the Gaikas.[1] These Kaffirs certainly had no very clear ideas of the duties of allegiance, nor had

[1] It is interesting to notice, in connection with the charges brought against Frere by Colenso and others, the Governor's attitude as contrasted with that of the colonial ministry to the Gaikas. Writing to Mr. Merriman (November 21, 1877) in reply to a question as to how we were to attach the Gaikas and gain their confidence, 'I say,' writes Frere, 'by ruling them justly and strictly, but mercifully, and not by letting loose volunteers and burghers to carry fire and sword through the country to inflict on them the terrible punishment we were forced to inflict on Kreli and his people. "But they steal our cattle." This is absolutely and entirely our own fault. If we had anything like a tolerable system of police, the stock-stealing might be made in three months as unprofitable an occupation in Sandilli's location as in Argyllshire. There is no kind of difficulty. Every farmer and trader will be a gainer, and there is no obstacle in the way save the inertness of the farmers themselves and their representatives.'

they any very compelling reasons to acknowledge the blessings of civilized government. By the action of their chiefs, however, they had accepted the sovereignty of the Queen, and therefore in resisting the authority of her magistrates they were technically rebels, and the nature of their treatment was thus laid down by Mr. Stokenstrom, the principal law adviser of the Molteno Government:

> There is, I think, no doubt but that a body of men acting in concert may lawfully undertake the duty of arresting, and in case of resistance kill the malefactors. They may, in my opinion, act under the direction of a leader chosen by themselves, and therefore they legally act under a police officer or magistrate or other person appointed by the Government.[1]

Sir Bartle Frere naturally took a very different view. Acting on his instructions, Mr. Merriman issued a proclamation to the magistrates acting under martial law:

> All offenders against law will be tried by you, but more especially those natives either taken with arms in their hands or who have in any way aided or abetted the prevailing disorder. The guilt of such offenders will of necessity vary much in degree. In the first place there may possibly be some of the chiefs and head-men who will be reserved for trial by a special court appointed by His Excellency the High Commissioner for that purpose; in the second place there will be Gaikas and other subjects of Her Majesty who may be taken with arms in their hands in resistance to the Queen's forces or otherwise. These men you will, after being satisfied with their guilt, sentence to death, to imprisonment, or hard labour, or transportation to such place as the Government may direct, to be kept in confinement with hard labour for a term of years.

This was far more drastic treatment than has been applied to those who, with much less excuse, took up arms against the Royal forces on the occasion of the two Boer invasions of the colony. But Mr. Molteno and his colleagues were much dissatisfied with the High Commissioner's leniency. The Prime Minister telegraphed to Mr. Merriman on January 4 to this effect:

> We entirely dissent from your views as to the form of trial to be adopted in the proclaimed districts and the sentences to be recorded, especially in the cases of persons taken with arms in their hands fighting against the Government. The adoption of the course suggested by you will entirely frustrate the object which we had in view in proclaiming martial law, and will, in fact, place rebels taken with arms in their hands

[1] February 4, 1878.

in a more favourable position than if reserved for trial before the ordinary tribunals of the country. The cumbrous machinery also proposed for the trial of rebels is, in our opinion, unsuited for the situation, and impracticable in the present emergency. All forms and technicalities are retained in your scheme, and useless delay will ensue if it be adopted; we consider that all rebels taken with arms in their hands should be tried by drumhead court-martial and shot without delay; that persons who have been engaged in the rebellion, but who laid down their arms, should be summarily tried by the Commissioners and sentenced to death, such sentence not to be carried into effect until approved of by the Governor.

So suspicious of clemency, in fact, and the results of clemency, was the Government that the next day Mr. Molteno telegraphed again:

Should an idea once get abroad that the Government hesitates to act vigorously, the most depressing effect will be produced, and that active co-operation on the part of the colonists, which might otherwise be expected, will flag. We see no reason to alter the opinion yesterday expressed as to your notices, which, if issued, would virtually neutralize martial law. I hope you will take care that we do not stultify ourselves.

Sir Bartle, who had been through the Indian Mutiny, and knew by experience the effects of drumhead justice, pointed out to the Ministry that his proposals, as embodied in Mr. Merriman's proclamation, would

> 'simply insure a fair court-martial to every person tried, and prevent as far as possible the irregular proceedings of inexperienced or excited men in command of detachments, who otherwise will bring disgrace on themselves and on the colony by executions after what they will call "drumhead court-martial."'

The Attorney-General was unmoved.

> 'Rebels in arms,' he said, 'may be shot without mercy or trial. Investigations at drumhead suggested by me merely to distinguish between rebels and other enemies, and allow instant execution of former on the field; if there is to be a formal trial as proposed, and delay of execution until Governor's approval obtained, there will not be a summary punishment recognised by law and justified by emergency.'

And in a minute to the Prime Minister he noted (with a sneer) that

> 'His Excellency, with that humanity for which he is famed, asks with a shudder whether I would slaughter

10,000 Kaffirs if they, instead of so many cattle, fell into our hands. My reply is that there is no chance of making so good a capture. . . . I have as great a horror of bloodshed as His Excellency has. . . . But I consider that our first duty is to secure peace to the colony, at whatever cost to the enemy. Every rebel is, in my humble opinion, deserving of death: if we punish as they deserve the first dozen we keep, many lives on both sides and an immense amount of treasure will be saved.'

Further, in a debate on the subject at the end of May, 1878, he said in reference to the minute:

'Where the enemy was too strong and prisoners were taken red-handed, the only alternative was to shoot them or to let them return to their comrades for the purpose of shooting us again, and he preferred the former course. He would advocate that course to-morrow, although his honourable friend opposite might hold up his hands in pious horror. He had lived on the frontier himself, and knew what it meant to be in the midst of armed foes, and this the honourable senior member for Cape Town did not know.'

As for Mr. Merriman's share in the business, let us listen to Mr. Upington, who was Attorney-General in Mr. Spriggs' Administration:

The honourable member for Wodehouse wished to be very guarded about what had been called drumhead work, which he thought was neither legal nor in accordance with the dictates of civilization; and he accordingly telegraphed to the then Colonial Secretary to say that he could not assent to such proceeding. The then honourable Colonial Secretary telegraphed back that he cared very little about what was said about 'Jamaica and drumhead work,' that things had better go on, have all the rebels shot, and then rely on the House to pass an act of indemnity.

A crisis was at hand to the development of which Mr. Merriman had very largely contributed. The importance of the issues involved in the controversy between the Governor and his Ministers has been strangely overlooked. Among the many services Sir Bartle did his country, not the least was the stand he made in the interest of the Imperial Government for the retention of prerogatives, without which the British claim of supremacy in South Africa would have been a common mockery. It may be seen at once that the action

of Molteno and his colleagues was dictated neither by a spirit of insubordination nor by a desire to get rid of, or even to weaken, the Imperial connection. From first to last there was no question of loyalty or disloyalty. There is no doubt that the Ministry was mistaken; there is none that they erred in ignorance. When the sanction of the Crown was given to the measure conferring responsible government upon Cape Colony, no pains were taken to define the differences between its status and that of the autonomies in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Among the traditions which Cape politicians took over with Parliamentary institutions was that faithful, almost servile, deference to precedent which has ever characterized the Parliament at Westminster. The Cape Ministers found that there was practically no limit to the autonomy enjoyed by the other self-governing colonies. In Canada, in the several Australias, and in New Zealand, the Governor was what the Cape Attorney-General told Sir Bartle Frere he was expected to be—a figure-head, with little more to do than discharge those social functions which are associated with royalty at home.

In a despatch dated January 30, 1878, on the eve of the crisis which led to the dismissal of Molteno and his colleagues, Sir Bartle Frere explained to Lord Carnarvon the views of Mr. Molteno and his colleagues, so far as he was able to ascertain them. Precision was a matter almost of impossibility, because

> 'I find the greatest difficulty, owing to Mr. Molteno's disinclination to place his views on permanent record or to discuss the measures he proposes in the presence of his colleagues or of other members of the Executive Council. Mr. Molteno's view,' the Governor continues, 'of the proper action of responsible government, as far as I can understand it, is that all matters of policy and all measures of importance are to be settled by the Cabinet in separate consultation without the Governor being present; that the Premier is to be the sole medium of communication between the Cabinet and the Governor on such matters, direct communication between the Governor and any other Cabinet Minister being only permissible on matters of departmental detail, not involving any question of policy or principle; that the

meetings of the Executive Council are simply for the formal registration of measures decided only by the Cabinet and sanctioned by the Governor, at which the attendance of the Commander of the Forces is generally unnecessary and inconvenient; and that anything like discussion of measures at the meetings of the Executive Council is, if not absolutely prohibited, so likely to be embarrasing that it is to be avoided as far as possible.'

In this theory of the relations between a Governor and his Ministers (which corresponds pretty closely to the theory and practice accepted in Great Britain) there was nothing which a doctrinaire politician could not justify by reference to text-books on constitutional government. Superficially, the tag that 'the King reigns but does not govern' sums up the relations between the Sovereign and the Prime Minister. As matter of fact, of course, the real nature of these relations is far more subtle and complex, as a perfunctory glance at any of the biographies of our late beloved Queen will show. It may be further admitted that the relations between the representative of the Crown and responsible Ministers in self-governing colonies are not unlike those between the Sovereign and the Prime Minister at home, as they are properly understood to be. It was not, therefore, astonishing that Mr. Merriman, who has always been a doctrinaire, whichever the side (and there is no counting his sides) on which he has found himself; who was, moreover, to use his own entertaining phrase, the only 'booky man' in the Cabinet, should infect Molteno with these constitutional fallacies. Fallacies they were, despite of their seeming conformity with precedent. A precedent has the same limitations as an analogy, and analogy, as logicians tell, is one of the most subtly dangerous forms of argument.

The conditions of South Africa are too essentially different from those of the other self-governing colonies to admit of our applying to one any inferences we may draw from our experience of the others. They may be briefly summarized:

1. We hold South Africa on a different tenure from that by which we are said to hold Canada, Australia, and New

Zealand. These colonies were not acquired by us for strategic purpose; their loss, though it would be a matter of infinite regret, would diminish our Imperial area, but would not threaten our Imperial existence. The link between them and the mother-country is purely voluntary. If, for good and sufficient reasons, they held it to their interest to 'cut the painter,' Great Britain would offer no stronger opposition than would be implied in a passionate protest. Quite other is our position in South Africa. We acquired the Cape of Good Hope because it was a halfway house upon what was then our sole highway to India, and, other motives apart, the fact is that it is still the halfway house to India on one of two possible routes, of which the second may not be open to us, or may not be safe to use, in time of European war. It is not possible to hold the Peninsula as we hold Gibraltar: whoever is master of the hinterland of the comparatively narrow strip of ground on which Cape Town and Simons Town are established is also master of our halfway house. Our retention, therefore, of South Africa, so far at least as the Zambesi, is dependent not on the goodwill of a majority of the inhabitants, however desirable it may be to secure that, but upon the exigencies of our Imperial position.

2. In Australia and in New Zealand the population may, for practical and political purposes, be regarded as purely Anglo-Saxon. There are not, as in South Africa, two races contending for ascendancy.[1] In Canada, it is true, there is a superficial resemblance between the position of the French Canadians and the taal-speaking Afrikander. In Canada, however, the existence of a little enclave of French-speaking, French-thinking, French-descended habitants, in the midst of a great continent inhabited by an English-speaking, English-thinking, English-descended people, is an insignificant factor. The inhabitants of the province of Quebec, if they grew tired of their position as British subjects, would find their only alternative in annexation by another branch of the Anglo-Saxon race. In South Africa the destruction

[1] By ascendancy of course is meant, not the reduction by one race of the other to a position of inferiority (as was the aim of Mr. Kruger in the Transvaal), but the ascendancy of language, customs, political habits, and thought.

of British supremacy would be followed either by the establishment of a United States bitterly hostile to England, or by their absorption in some European Power under the name of a protectorate. In either case our tenure of the peninsula would be worthless, and, as the peninsula is a bulwark of Empire, we should hold it at all costs against all comers, as we should certainly not attempt to hold Australia, Canada, or New Zealand in defiance of the Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders.

3. The factor which differentiates the position of South Africa from that of the other colonies cited is the existence of a Native Problem. Of all the questions which will have to be dealt with in South Africa this is the most important, as it is immeasurably the most difficult and the most complicated. For good or for evil, the Imperial Government, with the unanimous concurrence of all classes in England, has laid down broad lines of policy with regard to the treatment of the native races which, to say the least, are not identical with those that find favour in the eyes of half the whites in South Africa. I have already dealt with this question, and I allude to it here only because it comprehends a difference which would vitiate an analogy far more perfect than any to be instituted between our African colonies and those we possess elsewhere.

If the Home Government had carelessly ignored these divergences when self-government was bestowed upon Cape Colony, it was not unreasonable that they should be studiously set aside by Ministers at the Cape in the first enjoyment of their new powers. Had it not been for Frere's recognition of the momentous Imperial issues involved, and had he not resolutely vindicated the prerogatives of the Crown, British supremacy in South Africa would have long since vanished. The struggle was brief but decisive.

The whole question of the Governor's position was raised in its clearest form. Mr. Molteno's contention was that the Constitution put, as it were, the representative of the Crown and the Prime Minister of the colony in one bed, and that if there were not room for both, it was not the Prime Minister who would have to go. Had Sir Bartle acquiesced in this doctrine, the fate of British South Africa must have been

entrusted to the keeping of the Parliament in Cape Town. At that time, it must be remembered, and for very long after, Natal was without responsible government; the position of the territories lying between the Garden colony and the Cape was vague and undefined; the Transvaal had only just been annexed; there was still an unappeased rivalry between the Eastern and Western Provinces, so that the recognition of Mr. Molteno's claim would, for all practical purposes, have made the Dutch farmers of the Western Provinces the absolute controllers of South African destiny. Compliance on Frere's part would indeed have saved the Imperial Government from all trouble as to administration, for, whatever else might have befallen the land, it would soon have ceased to be British. There can be very little doubt that the seeds of that long conspiracy of which Lord Salisbury has spoken were sown about this time, nor any that the assertion of living Imperial rights disturbed many ambitions and interfered with many projects. Mr. Molteno and his colleagues would have had no objection to the annexation of the Transvaal, provided it were finally incorporated in the Cape Colony under what was called 'responsible,' but was meant to be independent, government. A federation securing Africa to the Afrikanders had its attractions for many, notably among the Dutch, which were wanting in a scheme which gave the Imperial Government an active part in the work of South African development. Frere had visioned (more clearly, perhaps, than its authors) the end of this independent policy, and he stopped it even at the start. He dismissed Mr. Molteno, and called upon Mr. (now Sir Gordon) Sprigg to form a Government.

Mr. Sprigg had hitherto had no experience of office, except as Prime Minister, and he acquiesced in the constitutional propositions laid down by Sir Bartle Frere. Up to the time of the present war they have not again been questioned. The experiment was crowned with great and immediate success. The Parliamentary sequel was described by Sir Bartle in a private letter (July 14, 1878):

When Parliament met, the ex-Ministers in the House and their friends in the newspapers were loud in demanding all the papers and correspondence regarding their dismissal. I left Mr. Sprigg at full liberty to

produce what he liked, and the first batch staggered the friends of the ex-Ministers. And after another batch or two the *Argus*[1] gave them up, and they literally have not had a single advocate in any leading or respectable paper in the colony or elsewhere in South Africa. Merriman brought forward a motion condemning me for their dismissal. He subsequently changed it to a condemnation of poor Sir Arthur Cuninghame, but after a long debate he was defeated by a larger majority than Molteno could ever boast of. Sprigg then brought forward his defence measures —a disarming Act, reforms of police, burghers, and volunteers, and a paid-yeomanry Bill—and they were carried with little alteration beyond what improved them. Then came their financial statement, the first full and plain and honest account the House has had for some years. This made a very favourable impression. And then taxing Bills to increase some of the Customs duties and to impose a house tax and an Excise duty were all well received. There has been a great fight over the Excise, but I think it will be carried. Finally Sprigg proposed a vote of thanks to Thesiger (afterwards Lord Chelmsford) and all his forces, including in his speech proposing it some very handsome words to Cuninghame. Mr. Molteno, as Leader of the Opposition, seconded it. It was carried unanimously; and the presentation of the address to the General and Commodore in person, with all their officers and all the rank and fashion of Cape Town in the galleries, was, I am told, a sight worth seeing, though the Governor, for 'constitutional reasons,' could not be present.

Thus ended the first, attempt—perhaps a half-conscious one at best—to oust the Imperial Government from supremacy in South Africa. For the escape we have to thank the patriotism and the resolution of Sir Bartle Frere, and these alone. The sequel may be told in the words of Frere's biographer:[2]

This was the last session of the first Cape Legislative Assembly. The new elections, which by custom extended over several months, were about to take place, and the Sprigg Ministry, to Frere's great satisfaction, in their programme promised a hearty support to the policy of confederation. Mr. Sprigg continued to be Colonial Secretary during the remainder of Frere's stay at the Cape. From first to last they worked together in complete harmony. The atmosphere of a constitutional government by Ministers responsible to a Parliament was to Frere, notwithstanding his Indian official training and experience, much more congenial than than that of a despotic or Crown government; and his decision, absence of reserve, and tenderness for local susceptibilities, gave him great influence and authority. Mr. Sprigg reciprocated his confidence, and regarded him with the warmest feelings of esteem and respect; and in his administration combined to an extent seldom attained by the chief of a colonial Ministry devotion to the interests of the colony with an equally jealous care for the honour and integrity of the Empire.

Frere's satisfaction was qualified by an unexpected blow,

[1] A Cape paper, always a very strong and able supporter of Mr. Molteno. It was at that time the property of Mr. Saul Solomon, 'the best man ever I knew,' Mr. Froude called him.

[2] 'The Transvaal Trouble,' p. 59.

which ultimately produced the most serious consequences. Lord Carnarvon resigned the office of Colonial Secretary. His political constitution was too delicate for the rude, workaday world. A dozen years or so before he had seceded, together with the present Lord Salisbury and General Peel, from Lord Derby's Administration, because he disapproved of the democratic tendency of Mr. Disraeli's theories of Parliamentary reform. On that occasion he had taken his stand upon a principle, but at the time of which I am speaking his reasons for resigning were merely unintelligible. He was as much committed as any of his colleagues, and, for the matter of that, as any contemporary statesman, to the maintenance of England's traditional policy in the East. Mr. Gladstone, it is true, had discovered, not for the first time in his life, that a national policy in which he had acquiesced while in office might easily become detestable when you surveyed it from a position 'of greater freedom and less responsibility,' and, though he had formally and positively announced his retirement from active political life, he now came forward to assail the policy associated with the only Government which could have been said to be controlled by the Peelites, of whom he was a type. Inside Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet only one Minister had any sort of sympathy with Mr. Gladstone's new departure, and that was, of course, Lord Derby. He was for peace at almost any price, and it was safe to assume that there were scarce any terms on which he would fight. Whatever the consequences of Russian action against the Ottoman Empire, on no grounds must we go to war. On the other hand, our traditional policy obliged us at least to veto the acquisition of the Bosphorus and of the Dardenelles, and Lord Derby was therefore quite ready to sacrifice the traditional policy. Not so Lord Carnarvon. He was at one with his colleagues in the belief that the possession of Constantinople by Russia would be fatal to the interests of our Empire; but when it came to practical measures, his nerve failed him, and he resigned. He hardly realized, perhaps, the effect of his action on the policy on which he had set his heart as Colonial Secretary. There is every reason to believe that he had been given a free hand in the elaboration of his idea of a federated South

Africa, for many circumstances tend to show that his colleagues, whose attention had been absorbed by other problems, knew very little about the conditions of that country. In any event, the retirement of two such conspicuous members of the Cabinet, which, it must be remembered, was a very small one, at a peculiarly critical moment, greatly embarrassed Lord Beaconsfield. He had, however, to fill the gaps in his line with as much speed and as little fuss as possible, and Colonel Stanley (now Lord Derby) was requisitioned to make good the loss of family influence, which it was feared might have serious party consequences in Lancashire; while Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who was then regarded as quite the most promising of the younger politicians, was promoted from the post of Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to the place vacated by Lord Carnarvon. The choice, whether Hobson's or another's, was unhappy. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was, as he is, a man of the highest character, of intellectual endowments considerably above the average, resolutely patriotic, and doggedly fearless. But he lacked both sympathy and imagination, qualities most desirable in a Colonial Secretary, the possession of which was Lord Carnarvon's chief qualification for the post. The duties of Chief Secretary were not so exacting and absorbing as they have since become, and there is no doubt that Sir Michael's interest in what seemed to him the greater problems of the moment was incapable of extension to the seedling Empire which his predecessor had tried to rear in South Africa. He entered upon his new duties at a time when the full blast of the Eastern hurricane was beating upon his Government, and it is by no means astonishing to find him devoting less of his attention to South Africa than to those issues which seemed to involve at once the fate of the Empire and that of the Ministry of which he was a conspicuous member. He expected, no doubt, that the Colonial Secretaryship would give him plenty of time for general politics. He was amazed, and, to be candid, he was indignant, when he found himself deceived in the office which he had hoped would prove a comparative sinecure. First and last he never seemed to grasp the importance of the problems pressing for solution in South

Africa. At any rate, he was always disposed to resent the fact that Sir Bartle Frere would not 'rest and be thankful,' and he persuaded himself that the High Commissioner was in some undefined way responsible for the dangers he was endeavouring to combat. To Frere himself the shock of Sir Michael's appointment was nearly paralyzing. He had accepted the high commissionership largely out of affection for Lord Carnarvon, and of sympathy with Lord Carnarvon's policy, and he instantly realized that, as like as not, his task would have to be left half done.

> 'Reuter's telegram,' he wrote to Lord Carnarvon (February 17, 1888), 'saying that you had left the Ministry has, without any figure of speech, utterly taken the heart out of me. I try to frame all kinds of theories by which you are again at the helm in the Colonial Office until South African federation is carried, or at soonest till my share in the work is finished, for I feel my interest in the work and my hopes of carrying it through sadly diminished by the possibility of your leaving the post which has so identified your name with the formation of South Africa. It is peculiarly trying to us just now when there seems at last a prospect of a break in the clouds. . . . If you have really left the Colonial Office, it adds another and the strongest of all reasons for my wishing to follow you and to rest after forty-four years of continuous service with very little holiday.'

The 'break in the clouds' was only a prelude to a darker and more menacing concentration in another quarter of the political firmament which he had to study. I do not propose here to discuss the merits and demerits of the policy which resulted, after a series of preliminary disasters, in finally crushing the military organization of the Zulus, my object being to deal with the second of the two chief factors in the South African sum only in so far as it immediately concerns the first—the relations of the two white races. It is impossible to discriminate between the several strands in an inextricable twist; but it is clear that even if there had been no Anglo-Afrikander problem, the Native Problem would have still demanded solution, though it would have presented itself in a different form. Had there been no South African

Republic, or had the Transvaal been occupied by men of British descent, the Zulu crisis might have been indefinitely, though not perpetually, postponed.

The annexation of the Transvaal, amongst its other consequences, robbed Cetewayo of his opportunity of washing his spears in the blood of the Boers without directly challenging the English. Said Sir Henry Bulwer about July 19, 1877:

> 'Probably Cetewayo has no wish to try conclusions with the English unnecessarily, but his temper of mind is such that he is quite prepared to fight not merely to defend himself and his authority as an independent King, but to fight on the slightest provocation, regardless of all consequences.'

The situation was complicated by another circumstance arising out of that unhappy jealousy between Natal and Cape Colony. Its effect upon the Native Problem was briefly summarized by a letter written by Frere to General Ponsonby at this date.

> 'The fact is that, while the Boer Republic was a rival and semi-hostile power, it was a Natal weakness rather to pet the Zulus, as one might a tame wolf, who only devoured one's neighbours' sheep. We always remonstrated, but rather feebly, and now that both flocks belong to us we are rather embarrassed in stopping the wolf's ravages.'

Sir Bartle Frere himself, as High Commissioner, visited Natal, and soon satisfied himself that nothing short of a suppression of the military autocracy in Zululand would save South Africa from the greatest disaster with which it had been yet menaced. After repeated outrages on the part of Cetewayo, which he either laughed away as trivial or tenaciously treated as the exercise of his prerogative, a peremptory demand was made to him, which is thus summarized by Frere's biographer:

> The existing military system was to be reformed, and all men allowed to marry as they came to man's estate; and while the universal obligation to serve in war was not interfered with, the regiments were not to be called up without permission of the great council of the Zulu nation assembled and the consent of the British Government. In order that all these provisions should be carried out, a British Resident in Zululand, or

on its immediate border, would be appointed, who would be the 'eyes, ears, and mouth' of the British Governor towards the Zulu King and the great council of the nation. The missionaries who had settled in the country were to be left unmolested as in Panda's time.

The responsibility for this policy rests with Frere, but it had the entire concurrence of Sir Henry Bulwer, who had had very considerable experience as Governor of Natal. In a memorandum dated December 16, 1878, Sir Henry writes:

The High Commissioner has judged it to be necessary, for reasons of the greatest moment to the welfare of this portion of South Africa, to place the condition of affairs in the Zulu country, and our relations with the Zulu King and people, on a more satisfactory basis than that on which they now are; and I entirely concur in His Excellency's position on this point, as also in the conditions which he has laid down, and which have been communicated to the Zulu King, and which are conditions for the better government of the Zulu people and for their great advantage, and conditions which, it may also be said, are indispensable for securing peace in this part of South Africa.

On our side the war with Cetewayo was a string of blunders. Over-confidence, contempt of the enemy, indifference to local knowledge[1]—all these defects were manifested as clearly in the Zulu War as they have been in the recent campaign. For the conduct of military affairs, however, Frere can in no sense be held responsible. Indeed, he did a great deal more than could be expected of a civilian in warning the soldiers of the difficulties in their way. At the moment of Isandhlwana, Lord Beaconsfield's Government was in a somewhat critical position. The Eastern Question was dividing England into two hostile camps. Mr. Gladstone had emerged from his retirement, and was crusading

[1] The case of Piet Uys is significantly illustrative. Mr. Uys was the son of a Voortrekker, killed in the war against Dingaan, in which he also lost a brother. He opposed the annexation of the Transvaal, but served with rare loyalty against Cetewayo. He won the warmest admiration of Sir Bartle Frere, and in a footnote to a reference to him Frere's biographer says: 'Colonel Wood (now General Sir Evelyn Wood) would sometimes announce his intended movements for next day at the camp-fire in the evening. On one occasion Uys objected, and at length said: "You can go with your men where you like and be killed, but I shall not go there." Colonel Wood replied warmly, "I suppose you think you can command better than I," to which Uys answered quietly, "No, I cannot command your men, but I know the country, and you don't." Wood wisely yielded.' Ex-President Kruger, as he is now, was among other leading Boers who vainly offered sound advice to the British officer in a war fought in Boer interests. His experience left Mr. Kruger with a fine contempt for all British commanders in South African warfare, saving, curiously, Dr. Jameson, whose performance against the Matabele aroused his admiration.

with unparalleled energy and vindictiveness against his life-long rival. Public opinion was oscillating violently between indignation (over Bulgarian atrocities) and apprehension (as to the designs of Russia). Never in our history has party feeling run higher than it did in the later seventies. Men and women who had disagreed fundamentally on great constitutional questions, yet had maintained their intimate friendly relations, now ceased to be on speaking terms. Politics invaded the dinner-table, and to such a pitch was party spirit aroused that in non-political clubs men were blackballed for opinions expressed upon the burning questions of the day. In such circumstances it was lamentable, but only natural, that the Opposition should endeavour to make the most of the embarrassments in which the disasters in Zululand involved the Ministry. Frere, who had devoted forty-five years of life to active service in divers lands, had neither opportunity nor desire to identify himself with either party. It would have puzzled most members of Parliament to have said whether he was Whig or Tory. That he was Carnarvon's nominee was enough to set on him the Radical pack then giving tongue to the view-holloa to Mr. Gladstone (who was certainly showing them sport). In ordinary circumstances there would have been compensation. By a natural process the villain of one party becomes the hero of the other, and Frere might reasonably have expected that the vehemence with which he was attacked would prove the measure of the enthusiasm with which he would be defended. Unfortunately for him and for the country, while he was an offence to the Radicals, he was quite innocently a stumbling-block to the Government. At the moment when affairs in Zululand necessitated his making an imperative call upon the military resources of the Empire, critical negotiations were afoot in Constantinople and in Egypt, which might be seriously affected by any diminution of England's military strength. As I have said, Sir Bartle Frere's natural defender in the Cabinet, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, was only half alive to the interests of the department over which he had suddenly been called to preside. It is almost incredible—but it is true—that a month was allowed to elapse between the reception of the news of Isandhlwana and the communication

to Frere of the views entertained by the Cabinet. A telegraphic message announcing that disaster reached England on February 11, just three days before the meeting of Parliament. With the exception of a despatch on March 6, in which there was no suggestion of blame, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach wrote not to Frere until March 13. Meantime votes of censure had been moved in both Houses of Parliament. In the Cabinet it would seem that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury were the only Ministers who were unprepared to disavow Sir Bartle. A compromise was the result, and the Colonial Secretary sent a despatch to the High Commissioner, which combined the gravest censure of his policy with an almost passionate appeal to him not to resign. It wound up as follows :[1]

Her Majesty's Government do not fail to bear in mind the unusual powers reposed in you, and the corresponding responsibility which attaches to your office as Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, and they gladly record their high appreciation of the great experience, ability, and energy which you have brought to bear on the important and difficult task you have undertaken. It is with a great regret that they feel constrained to adopt the view which I have expressed of your omission to follow a course which appears to them, for the reasons I have stated, to have been peculiarly incumbent upon you in this instance. They cannot, however, doubt that your future action will be such as to prevent a recurrence for any cause of complaint on this score, and they have no desire to withdraw in the present crisis of affairs the confidence hitherto reposed in you, the continuance of which is now more than ever needed to conduct our difficulties in South Africa to a successful termination.

This despatch was published in England before it could reach Frere in Pretoria. In a speech at Cape Town[2] Lord Milner denounced the stupid old trick of giving away your friend in the idle hope of conciliating your enemy. The censure upon Frere, so far from disarming the enemies of the Government, gave them new weapons of offence, and took the heart out of his natural defenders. Lord Granville, who was then the nominal leader of the Opposition, was heard to say: 'I hope to God Sir Bartle Frere won't take huff and resign;' and Lord Carnarvon wrote as follows by the mail[3] following the publication of despatch :

'I cannot allow the mail to go without a few lines

[1] March 19, 1879. [2] May, 1901. [3] March 27, 1899.

to repeat my earnest hope that you will consider well before you resign your office. I readily understand the difficulties in which you are now placed; I do not hesitate to say that I think you have much of which you may complain. But I greatly fear that your resignation of office at this juncture would involve great embarrassment, perhaps even disaster.'

Frere had undertaken his task reluctantly, and only because he believed that by accepting the high commissionership he would strengthen the Empire. Carnarvon's resignation, as we have seen, was a blow to him. He had been strongly moved to tender his resignation there and then. Now a high and splendid sense of duty not only kept him at his post, but held him silent under the censure of an ignorant and incurious chief. As for the manner in which that censure was published ere it reached his ears, it is merely inexcusable. Isandhlwana was fought in the middle of February, and it was not till the middle of April that, through the medium of a news agency, it was made known to South Africa that the High Commissioner Frere had been formally censured. The High Commissioner knew nothing of the despatch till he read a précis of it in the newspapers. Mr. Sprigg, the Prime Minister, instantly begged him not to resign.[1]

If you were now to retire, the consequences to South Africa would be simply disastrous. . . . I hope you will not come to a decision adverse to the wishes of nearly every man in Africa without giving me an opportunity of discussing with you the whole question. . . . In my representative character as First Minister of the leading colony of South Africa, and on behalf of its inhabitants, whose opinion has been expressed through public meetings in every important town, I do urge you not to think for a moment of giving way to public opinion in England on a question which no man who has never been in Africa is competent to understand.

Frere was too good an Englishman and too great a public servant not to prefer his country's cause before his own dignity. He did well—thrice well; yet his sacrifice at this pass was wasted, as were all his sacrifices in South Africa. The insult was too gross, the brutality too flagrant. His prestige was shaken—not, indeed, in the colony, which never wavered in its passionate loyalty to him, but beyond

[1] April 24, 1879.

its frontiers—and it never recovered the shock. It is not too much to say that had Frere been backed by his superiors at home there would have been no Boer War of 1899-1902. But the ineptitude of the Imperial Government weakened his position with the Boers in two ways. In the first place, they recognised that his authority was of so flimsy a make that a whiff of public opinion could blow it away; and, in the second, they construed the agitation fostered in England into a proof that the Imperial Government was bent upon pursuing the old policy of petting the native at the expense of the white. In a word, the inference they drew from the facts before them was that Frere had not the confidence of the Colonial Office, and that, even if he had, the policy which he would accomplish must inevitably involve the recognition of equality between the white and black races. Frere's apologia, a masterly document, fills some dozen pages of a blue-book. It should be read in its entirety by those who would understand the relations between the Colonial Office and its representatives under the old system (now abandoned, let us hope, for ever).[1]

In this manly and dignified protest is revealed what Tacitus called an *arcanum imperii*. It is no mysterious nor recondite secret. The British Empire must, in the nature of things, be ruled directly or indirectly from London. If we study the problem of such government from an abstract point of view, it seems hopelessly insoluble. The system of party politics appears to be incompatible with the maintenance of a world-wide Empire. In the last hundred years, with one exception, and that of quite recent date, none of those appeals to the country which determine the colour and character of Ministries has turned upon the question of Imperial policy. By Imperial policy I mean the terms and conditions upon which the Empire is to be welded and consolidated for purposes of self-defence. The statesman called upon to preside over the Colonial Office owes his position there, nineteen times in twenty, not to his personal fitness for the post, nor to any decision at which the country may have arrived with regard to colonial policy, but to the verdict of

[1] It will be found in C. 2454, p. 129.

the electors on some domestic matter, which affects the colonies remotely, if at all. If we asked ourselves why, in succession, Lord Bathurst, Lord Glenelg, Lord Stanley, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Grey, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Kimberley, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, or Lord Ripon, should have been entrusted with the control of colonial affairs, we could only answer ourselves by saying that they were all great or conspicuous or influential politicians, for whom some place had to be found in the Imperial Cabinet. I have included in this list neither Lord Carnarvon nor Lord Knutsford, and least of all Mr. Chamberlain, because, for different reasons, they are manifest exceptions; but it is not too much to say that, till Mr. Chamberlain went to the Colonial Office, there was not a single statesman of the first order who chose that office for himself when others were at his disposal, because he thought that the consolidation of the Empire should be, if not the first, at least among the first, questions which should claim the attention of the Imperial Executive. How, then, it may be asked, has it happened that under a system theoretically so preposterous the British Empire has managed to get along as well as it has done? The answer is to be found in the unrivalled excellence of our Civil Service. A great and most acute political writer—a Frenchman—declared that our Imperial supremacy was due almost exclusively to a custom much abused in this country—the custom of primogeniture. The younger sons, he said, of the ruling classes—if such a phrase be permissible in these democratic days—are brought up to manhood with all the advantages of education, social training, and association enjoyed by the eldest son, who is to become a lord of many acres. By the time the cadet of the family reaches manhood, he is taught that, but for a portion quite inadequate to the tastes which he has cherished from childhood, he must make his own way in the world. That way, in a large number of cases, is opened to him by the Civil Service. He has inherited those ruling instincts—as palpable as they are incapable of definition—which enable him in India or the colonies to take up the task of governing men at an age when most of his foreign contemporaries are hardly out of leading-strings. With these instincts the

course of his training has combined habits of self-reliance and traditions of honour, which make him superior to many of the temptations which beset the Civil Servant in other countries. The character of the Civil Service has reacted upon its political chiefs. They assume that utter reliance can be placed on the integrity and singleness of purpose of those to whom is delegated the actual work of governing in distant dependencies, and the assumption is very rarely belied. So it comes to pass that the business of the Empire is really done, not in Downing Street, but by men who, save at exceptional crises, are never heard of by the mass of their countrymen till their names appear with honourable prefixes or affixes in the *Gazette*. It is an anomalous system, but it is the sovereign corrective of the still more anomalous and theoretically absurd system of party government. Without much exaggeration, it might be described as autocracy delegated by democracy. The Colonial Minister gives, in fact, to the higher members of the Civil Service an authority which, on a strict interpretation of constitutional theory, he does not himself possess. The excellence of the system is demonstrated by the bitter experience we have learned from departures from it. South Africa is strewn with such warnings. The names of D'Urban, Grey, Frere, recall a series of disasters which resulted from our neglect of the man on the spot. From the time when the relations between Frere and the Minister in office ceased to be such as the system demanded that they should be, Frere's capacity for usefulness to the Empire was almost exhausted. He struggled nobly, and he did his duty as a great Englishman will; but his hands were tied, and, for all the service he could do the Empire, he might well have had far earlier that release from responsibility which was presently to come to him in circumstances of disgrace and discredit to its authors. His vindication came years after his death, but, though tardy, it is complete. He is with Hastings now, and Clive; for if he did not succeed as splendidly as they succeeded, he planned as nobly, and was even worse rewarded. What Englishman to-day can read without self-reproach the words of that despatch:

> Few, as you say, will now be found to agree with me in this view—few, I fear, in this generation.

But unless my countrymen are much changed, they will some day do me justice. I shall not leave a name to be permanently dishonoured. Meantime, many thousand colonists and hundreds of thousands of native subjects will feel secure in the Queen's dominions who could not sleep in safety before the war. . . .

No fresh storm can be more desolating in its effects on me than that which has passed over me, and apparently wrecked for the time such repute as I had as a prudent, just, and loyal public servant.

'For a time'! For nearly twenty years.

CHAPTER V

MAJUBANIMITY

In the following chapter I propose to set forth the causes and consequences of the policy which reversed the action of Sir Theophilus Shepstone and restored the independence of the Transvaal. As the great majority of my countrymen decline to dignify by the title of 'magnanimity' the humour of scuttle adopted by Mr. Gladstone, and as the admirers of that statesman object to the application of the word 'pusillanimity' to the frame of mind he fell into, I have taken the liberty of following a precedent sanctioned by so respectable an authority as Aristotle, and have coined a word which is strictly non-committal. 'Majubanimity' may be a good policy or a bad. It may have been dictated by the highest and most disinterested motives, or prompted by the least creditable influences to which frail human nature is subject. I am here concerned rather to trace its consequences than to classify it, for to these consequences is demonstrably due the work which confronted and confronts Lord Milner.

When Messrs. Kruger, Jorissen, and Bok left the Transvaal for England, it was with the avowed object of protesting against the annexation of the Transvaal, and of making the best terms possible in case they should find, as Sir Bartle Frere assured them they would, that that policy was irrevocable. Two things are tolerably clear. The first is, that the agitation for the restoration of the South African Republic was engineered in the Cape Colony; the second was, the absence of any expectation on the part of Messrs. Kruger and Co. that their mission would succeed. As the High Commis-

sioner informed the Colonial Secretary, after an interview with Messrs. Kruger and Joubert:

> I was subsequently assured by some of the gentlemen present that neither Mr. Kruger nor Mr. Joubert were at all insensible of the hopelessness of their present enterprise, though they were not quite prepared to avow such unpopular opinions to their less instructed countrymen in the Transvaal.

For reasons which are sufficiently obvious, the Dutch inhabitants of Cape Colony had supported the confederation policy of Lord Carnarvon, as expounded to them by Mr. Froude. So carelessly has the history of this time been written and studied, that this early attitude of theirs has been construed into a proof of their loyalty. As matter of fact, the impression Mr. Froude had left upon their minds was that, while Great Britain was ready to guarantee South Africa against foreign invasion in return for permission to retain the Cape Peninsula, she was anxious to be rid of all responsibility for internal government. Mr. Froude told them that confederation practically meant encouragement to the Dutch, then the great majority of the colonists, to establish an independent State, bound no more closely to Great Britain than was involved in the relations of protected to protector. On the occasion of his visit to Bloemfontein, in the course of his first unofficial trip, he delighted the Free Staters with an extravagant eulogy of their character, and even with a long quotation from Horace.

> When I look[1] (he said) on the populations swarming at the diamond-fields, with those enormous piles as monuments of their unprofitable labour, and when I consider along with it that it was the imagined wealth which these mines were producing that had set South Africa on fire with all these new aspirations, I thought again of what Horace said of the men of progress in the age of Augustus:
>
> 'Non his juventus orta parentibus
> Infecit æquor sanguine Punico,
> Pyrrhumque, et ingentem cecidit
> Antiochum Hannibalemque dirum:
> Sed rusticorum mascula militum
> Proles, Sabellis docta ligonibus
> Versare glebas, et severæ
> Matris ad arbitrium recisos
> Portare fustes.'
>
> The men of the diamond-fields were not men of the same stamp as those who in the English and Dutch fleets dyed the English Channel

[1] W. Gresswell, 'Our South African Empire,' vol. i., p. 228.

with the blood of the Spaniards of the Armada. Then, as always, the soldiers who risked their lives in defence of their country were the hardy yeomanry and peasantry and fishermen who were fighting for home and fireside. What interest have miners and store-keepers and speculators in the independence of South Africa? Under any flag they can equally pursue their trade and gain such ends as they are contending for. You have the misfortune to possess a soil and clime of unexampled excellence, and a position on the globe the most attractive to every ambitious and aggressive Power.[1] The independence of South Africa will come when you can reply to those Powers with shot and shell, and you will do that when you have ceased to turn your energies into the most immediate and easy way of making money for yourselves and have set heartily to work to bring out the resources of your soil. I honour and admire the achievement of national independence, because it can be achieved only by courage and self-denial and hardihood of habit of life.

In his peroration he bade the Dutch 'enclose their wildernesses, plough, dig, drain, sow, and breed up a hardy population, whose home would be South Africa, and whose hopes would be centred there. Then they might hope to see their confederate flag float over South Africa.' And this precious effusion to the burghers of an independent State was discretion itself compared to the encouragement to separation which he addressed to the Queen's subjects in his capacity of interpreter to the author of the scheme for federating South Africa:

Let me tell you generally, gentlemen,[2] what Lord Carnarvon desires for this country. He recognises—we all recognise—that the European inhabitants of South Africa are growing up into a great nation. It is so; it must be so. You have only to look at the map to see what a splendid position you occupy. Your resources are enormous. You have in you the vigour and energy of the races whence you are sprung. Nothing can stop you. Then, what is our position towards you? If you are to grow, you must grow your way, not ours. English statesmen, therefore, wish to leave you to yourselves, to leave you the full management of your internal affairs, whilst we confine ourselves to the protection of your coasts. . . . We protect you with our fleet and with our flag. We ask you for nothing in return but the Imperial station at Simon's Town and an assurance that, if we are ever again at war, the resources of this country will be at our service and not at that of our enemies. . . . At present you are in your nonage, but a time will come when you will arrive at maturity, as well as the privileges of a full and perfect nationality. If you wish to leave us and the British Empire, we shall regret your loss, but we shall not oppose your inclination.

[1] It seems a pity, while Mr. Froude was in the mood for classical quotations, that he did not cite to his hearers,

> 'Italia, O Italia, thou who hast
> The fatal gift of beauty.'

Byron would have been at least as intelligible to them as Horace.

[2] 'Our South African Empire,' vol. i., p. 236.

That he meant exactly what the Transvaal triumvirate meant when at the outbreak of the insurrection against Great Britain they raised the cry, 'Africa for the Afrikanders, under an Afrikander flag from the Zambesi to Cape Point,' is proved by his advice to the Free Staters in the speech from which I have already quoted:

> Show that at least there is one State in South Africa sincere in its aspirations for the establishment of a South African nation which shall be independent indeed. The contagion of your example may spread; the spirit of your national life may penetrate the veins of the entire country; and the day may come when we shall witness one new free country amongst the communities of the world.

As Mr. Greswell tells us in the work from which I have taken these quotations:[1]

> As late as November, 1874, the year before Mr. Froude paid his first visit to the Cape, President Burgers had made a strong appeal before the Volksraad to the sentiment of unity amongst all Afrikanders from Table Mountain to Magaliesberg. He deprecated the barrier that prevented candidates for office coming from the Free State, and he assured the Raad that at the foot of Table Mountain itself hearts were throbbing more warmly for the Republic than perhaps even in the Free State itself.

No. The sentiment which made the Dutch Afrikander an enthusiast for the Carnarvon policy, as he understood it, was not loyalty, but the reverse of this. He saw in confederation not a closer connection with Great Britain, but an almost complete scheme of independence for South Africa, and this misconception may possibly account for the apathy with which the annexation of the Transvaal was at first regarded by the Cape Dutch. Their lethargy was no doubt deepened by theological abhorrence for President Burgers, but it did not last long. As soon as it was realized that Great Britain intended to annex the Transvaal as part of her Empire, and to federate the different States of the sub-continent, there was an instant revulsion of feeling. The official organ of the Transvaal Government had accepted the situation with something brighter and less easy than sombre acquiescence. The Dutch *Die Patriot*, which was published at the Paarl, held out violently from

[1] 'Our South African Empire,' i., 235 *et seq.*

the first, and a petition of 5,000 Dutchmen was signed protesting against the annexation.

Yet the *Volksstem*, of Pretoria (March 28, 1877), had declared itself thus:

> About three months ago we said we would prefer confederation under the British flag, if the state of anarchy then threatening were likely to continue. We have been called turncoats, weathercocks, and such-like for this announcement. We care very little for such strong words, for we know that a good and stable government is better than anarchy any day, and we prefer seeing the people and the country saved, even if it was to be done in spite of the inhabitants; and we now say—or, rather, repeat—that the prolonged independence of this country rests with the people, and that, if the country must fall, it depends upon us whether it is to fall honourably or not.

And the *Argus*, published at Potchefstroom, on April 13, before it received the news of the annexation, had confessed that 'no one would glory more in a strong, united, really independent South African Republic than we, and none but ourselves know what it costs us to have to endorse the opinion that the annexation of the Transvaal by the British Government is justifiable.' Here, too, it will be not inappropriate to quote a few words from a work published at Leyden in 1879 by an anti-English Dutchman, one Theodore Tromp:[1]

> Certain it is that during the latter days of its existence the condition of the Republic was so peculiar that nothing like it in the world's history is to be met with. The confusion in the authority of the State, the stupid unwillingness of the Boers to assist in any way, the pressure of widely diverging parties, the foreign influences that detrimentally affect the course of things, the widely differing elements that possessed the State, the relative attitude of the whites and natives—all these and many more reasons reduced the vitality of the young Republic to a minimum.

In brief, the opposition to annexation was initiated by the Dutch of the Orange Free State and of the Cape Colony, who saw in it the death-blow to the aspirations for a Dutch Republic from Cape Agulhas to the Zambesi. I may quote a book published in 1887, which records the three years' experience of a Scotch minister (the Rev. James Mackinnon), for some time a student at the theological seminary at Stellenbosch. His sympathies were very largely with his fellow-students, who were training for the ministry in the

[1] 'Herrinnerin gen Zuid Afrika,' 279.

Dutch Reformed Church, and of their depth and intensity his reference to the seminary is proof. Writing in 1881:[1]

During its twenty-six years' existence (he says), the seminary has sent forth a very large band of hardworking ministers, and it has therefore fulfilled a great vocation. It does not pretend to be more than a practical training school. It is only on a rare occasion, therefore, that it turns out a theologian. Still, it is not too much to say that it has more influence on the life of the Dutch-speaking people of South Africa, who make a very large proportion of the whole, than many a fairly large European University on the existence of the people within its reach. It is the idol of tens of thousands of Boers, who have never seen it, but who delight to spend their evenings catechizing a student who has been to the great seat of learning, and returns to his native village to be for weeks the centre of an admiring, inquisitive group about 'ons seminarie,' as they affectionately term it. It has opened up a way by which scores of suitable young men might supply the spiritual needs of the many vacant parishes, and has thus been one of the instruments of bringing the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa into its present flourishing condition.

And in speaking of the Afrikander Bond he tells you frankly that

It had a patriotic basis[2] in hatred of English tyranny, disgust at English mismanagement, pity for their own supposed miseries, the glorious dream of an Afrikander flag, and an Afrikander history. . . . Old residents of the colony, like the Boers, must feel that, however much they may arrogate to themselves a name such as Afrikander, Dutch South African, Natalian, there is really little more than the sound of the letters in it. It is vague and uninspiring compared with those that enclose within them the grandeur of a renowned past. People of English descent in South Africa glory in maintaining their English name, because it enables them to feel what the members of an old distinguished family feel in contrast to one with neither laurels nor venerable memories. . . . Cut off from their old fatherland, and being neither English, though under English rule, nor Dutch, though bearing the names of Holland, the Boers seek to give the term 'Afrikander' a more definite meaning by flying a flag and making a history which should worthily bear its name. . . . These are all branches of the stem—the Nationaliteits Gevoel—and to put life and strength into both stem and branches till they became a full-grown tree has been the striving of the Afrikander Bond since its formation six years ago.[3] It has held numerous meetings, local, provincial, central, and speechified itself hoarse. It has written lamentations and sung psalms according as its temper was desponding or jubilant. It has extended sympathy to the down-trodden Boers without doing battle against the accursed English. It has published a programme of principles in which it declares with rebellious boldness that it aims at a united South Africa under its own flag. Its stump orators have declaimed against the use of the English language, which the educated youths of the land have begun to speak instead of the Dutch patois.

The question may well be asked why the Dutch in the

[1] Mackinnon, 'South African Traits,' p. 31.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 268. [3] Written in 1887.

Cape Colony should be more bitterly opposed to the incorporation of the South African Republic in the British Empire than the Boers of the Transvaal themselves. The answer to this question is all-important, not only because it supplies the key to the situation as it presented itself in Sir Bartle Frere's time, but because, without it, it is impossible to understand the trend of racial feeling which has culminated in the war of 1899-1901. Had the Dutch in Cape Colony suffered under English rule, or had they been placed in a position of political inferiority to the colonists of British descent, it would have been easy to conceive that, in sheer unselfish disinterestedness, they might have hoped to save their kinsmen beyond the Vaal from coming under a galling and detestable yoke. Even if they had been content with their position, and the South African Republic had been a growing, flourishing, and prosperous community reflecting credit upon the Afrikander aptitude for self-government, we might imagine and admire a racial pride which should arise in wrath against the abolition of a shining proof of Afrikander genius. But none of these things was true. The Dutch in Cape Colony had long been in the enjoyment of whatever political privileges they were to enjoy. A few years before responsible government had given them the chance, since they were in the majority, of moulding the destinies of Cape Colony to their own liking. Some few years later they succeeded in giving 'Kitchen Dutch' an official equality with Shakespeare's English in the Cape Parliament. There had been no single modern case of interference by the Imperial Executive with either their privileges or their prejudices. If the Cape Colony had grievances, they were shared by Englishmen equally with Dutchmen, and it is quite certain that Englishmen would take the lead, and court the assistance of their Dutch fellows in protesting against any tyranny on the part of Downing Street. Moreover, if the Dutch colonists had been anxious to strengthen their position in the Cape Parliament, and at the same time maintain their loyalty to Great Britain, the incorporation of the Transvaal would have increased their voting strength, which was already sufficiently strong. From the point of view, therefore, of Dutch subjects in a self-governing colony loyal to

Great Britain, the annexation, so far from being a misfortune, should have been looked upon as a blessing. As to the other point of view, it was not denied by any Cape Boer, intelligent or other, that on the eve of annexation the Republic was exhausted, almost moribund. The emigrant farmers who had settled there had never developed, or shown any promise of developing, the most elementary aptitude for self-government. They elected Presidents, and refused to support them. They loved not taxes, and declined to pay them. They would join in commandos against raiding Zulus, and would quit their commandos at the call of their farms. They had experimented with a President whose sole idea was to secure the isolation of his people and to escape the plague of English bustle and English enterprise; and they had tried a President who in imagination saw the establishment of a South African Republic spreading from shore to shore and teeming with millions of taal-speaking citizens, courted by the European Powers, possessed of a sufficient fleet, and prepared to take its place amongst the nations of the world. And they had treated the dreamer as they treated the recluse, obeying the one and the other just so far as it suited them individually, and not a jot further. They could not, and they did not, deny that the hostility of the Kaffir races was a standing menace, not only to themselves, but to the whole white race, and they had proved their incapacity to cope with even so insignificant a fraction of Kaffir militarism as Sikukuni could command. If it be impossible to explain the attitude of the Cape Colonists on either of the grounds which I have discussed, the cause must be sought elsewhere.

After the conclusion of the Sand River Convention, there probably never was a time when there did not exist in the Dutch Afrikander mind a belief that a day of mastery would come. In this connection a most unfortunate use has been made of the phrase 'conspiracy.' In Ireland there is no sort of evidence of an agrarian conspiracy before the formation of the Land League; but in Ireland there was a general consensus of opinion to the effect that landlords were the common enemy, and that rent was a form of robbery, which crystallized at a touch into an organized refusal to pay.

Fintan Lalor devised in prison a plan for the emancipation of Ireland, which was afterwards put in practice by Michael Davitt. By itself, he said, Repeal was incapable of moving; it must be attached to some other great question appealing directly to the appetites of the people, as trucks are attached to a locomotive. He found his locomotive in the Agrarian Question, which he thought was strong enough to drag both itself and Repeal, and it was the working out of his idea that brought Home Rule within the sphere of practical politics. Much the same state of things existed in South Africa. 'Conspiracy' there was none, but the aspiration for a Dutch Republic existed in all the States and colonies, and Burgers vainly attempted to crystallize the fluid. The aspiration was kept alive by encouragement from Holland, and there was a party in that country which, mourning over the lost glory of the Netherlands, believed that the old ascendancy might be revived by the establishment of a Republic oversea—a Republic standing towards Holland in the same relation as, but for the War of Independence, the English colonies in America might have stood to England. The thing is plain enough now to anyone taking the trouble to study the African problem retrospectively; in 1879 it was clear to none but a few far-sighted men. Nor is it possible to blame the majority of those intimate with South African affairs for ignoring a danger which seemed at once so nebulous and so distant. They knew of the aspiration, but they never believed that there was a chance of the dream's materializing, and they laughed at signs, which seemed insignificant then, of its living reality—such signs, I mean, as the change of name of the Dutch African Republic to that of the South African Republic, which was really as pregnant in its way as the subsequent transformation of the Dutch *Zuid Africaan* into the more arrogant if more patriotic *Ons Land.* Among the few who foresaw the coming hurricane was Sir Bartle Frere, and in a despatch to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (August 28, 1879) he said:

Union after the fashion indicated in the South African Act of last year is so much to the advantage of all concerned that nothing but party tactics and party perversity can long delay its acceptance by a great majority of thankful colonists. But they cannot be dragooned into it nor made to accept it 'by Imperial,' as Paterson would call it, for they

are at least as obstinate and self-willed as the stock they come from, whether Dutch, English, Scotch, or Irish.

By careful explanation, perseverance, and some 'give-and-take,' we may induce all to agree to any really useful measure. To be useful or acceptable, it must include the grant of some form of self-government either immediate or immediately prospective to all members of the union. We were on the fair road to this when my supersession by Wolseley threw us all back. It is always difficult to revert to the exact *status quo ante*. To weaken the influence of your Governor and his Ministers here when those Ministers are thoroughly loyal and English in feeling is simply playing into the hands of Messrs. Colenso, Saul Solomon, and Merriman, the bitter anti-English Opposition here and in Natal.

They are sedulously creating a Dutch party, and swaying the loyal Dutch (a great majority of the Cape Dutchmen) to swell the already considerable minority who are disloyal to the English Crown here and in the Transvaal, and who would prefer a Holland (that is, remember, a *German*)[1] Government or Protectorate in the Transvaal to an English one, and a Republic here to a Dominion under the British Crown. . . . This is not avoiding increase of responsibilities; it is merely inviting their increase by turning your back and shutting your eyes while they are growing.

All colonists know this well, and, except crotchety philanthropists and political partisans, all acknowledge it, and if they see us so acting, none will feel secure nor consent to confederate except with some strong military Power, on which they can depend for help in time of need.

We are, meantime, drifting into very awkward relations with these colonies. What you are now doing seems to me uncomfortably like what was done more than a century ago when we drove the American colonies into war and forcible separation.

From the Treaty of Paris in 1763 to the end of the War of Independence in 1783 it took twenty years for the quarrel to arise, culminate, and be fought out in separation. We do things faster nowadays. The whole history of the causes of difference, the character of the disputes between the British Government and the States, and the mode in which they were carried on, were *mutatis mutandis* very like the storm now brewing here.[2] . . . I wish you to be warned in time, and, having warned you, I have done my duty. If you think I am an alarmist, I wish you would refer to Lord Salisbury, or Lord Halifax, or others who have known me long, and can judge whether I am one to be deluded or deterred by phantom fears.

And again (February 16):

Here in the Transvaal and Natal, unless we are careful, we shall foster the formation of a powerful anti-English party, whose dogged resistance to authority as authority will be quite as troublesome as active rebellion.

You remember the attempts made by the Transvaal Republicans to enlist the sympathy of the German Government. They did not then succeed, but they may have better success if they appeal to the German

[1] The italics in all these quotations are Frere's own.

[2] Mr. Methuen, in his book 'Peace or War in South Africa,' seems to imagine that he first discovered this analogy, which he has misinterpreted, as he has most of the facts of South African history.

Socialists, and a few score of them would be a very formidable addition to the ranks of the disaffected in South Africa.

And yet again, about the same time:

Most men *at present* would desire such union under the British Crown; others, botn here and in England, would prefer it on the model of the United States of North America, as a South African Republic, which, according to my own convictions, would mean for many years to come an internecine knot of Republics, with a filibustering element of the South American or Mexican type, but all under the influence of some great European Power possessing a navy, and appreciating as well as, or perhaps better than, we do the dominion of the Southern Ocean, of which the Cape Peninsula is the key.[1]

I shall give one more extract from Frere's neglected prophecies. It is contained in a letter to Sir Henry Ponsonby, to whom, for the information of Her Majesty (she followed affairs in South Africa with the closest interest) he was in the habit of writing very frankly and very confidentially (April 3, 1880):

Whatever Sir Garnet Wolseley may say or think of the general feeling up in the Transvaal, the Dutch population down here who have relations up there are seriously uneasy and angry, and a feeling has been created here about the Transvaal and its annexation which certainly did not exist

[1] In the course of my sojourn at the Cape in 1900, I received a curious confirmation of Frere's prediction of what would follow in South Africa on the establishment of a South African Republic on the model of the United States of North America. I had the pleasure of more than one conversation with a very intelligent Dutch gentleman, who made no secret of his preferring Dutch supremacy to English supremacy if the former were possible, for, as he said, there must be one or the other. He told me that he was one of the very few Dutch residents at Stellenbosch who had refused to sign the petition for the retrocession of the Transvaal in 1881. 'I admit,' he said, 'that I do not like, and have never liked, your ideas of government or your ways, but I am convinced that there is only one chance for South Africa, and that is in complete union. I should have preferred that the union came into existence under the Dutch flag, or at least under a flag of its own; but I know that that would have been impossible. I have travelled much in Europe and in America, and I convinced myself long before 1881 that an independent South Africa under its own flag would soon break up into a series of bitterly hostile Republics, whose unceasing conflicts would render the whole country an easy prey for the first European Power which had the energy to seize it. I am, therefore, loyal with my head, though my heart is with the Boers.' He told me also a curious fact which I may as well mention here. He was a great personal friend of Mr. Kruger's, and when the President was ignoring the interests of Cape Colony in his desire to secure a monopoly for the Netherlands Railway, Mr. —— went to Pretoria and told the President that it was very ungrateful of him to trample upon the interests of the Dutch farmers in Cape Colony, because, but for the petitions which they had all but unanimously signed in 1881, there would have been no restoration of independence to the Transvaal. 'The President,' he said, 'turned upon me like a puff-adder, and shouted, "Gladstone cared that for your petitions," with a characteristic snap of the finger and thumb. "Had it not been for Majuba, you might as well have put all your petitions in the fire."'

a few months ago, and reacts in a manner very prejudicial to the present Ministry here, who are Englishmen, and known to be thoroughly loyal to the English Crown.

What may be the precise extent and results of this change of feeling I shall hardly be able to judge till the Colonial Parliament meets next month. I am made aware of it whenever I meet a genuine Dutch Afrikander farmer, who is apt to let me know that his goodwill is personal to me and my office, and is 'not to be misunderstood as implying any approval of our doings in the Transvaal.' But the most obvious evidence is to be found in the Radical and Republican English press in the colony, which tries to ally itself with the Dutch Afrikander party, and has some success with the Dutch Republican section. The great body of the Dutch are not more Republican at present than our English Whigs, the Dutch Church (Reformed) especially being very strong, and rarely disloyal to the British Crown,[1] though disliking most things British, including the English language and Church doctrine, and, not unnaturally, English aggressiveness and Cockneyism.

I do not think that I ever mentioned to you that the Dutch Reformed Church is identical in doctrine and very similar in its divisions to the Scotch Kirk. You easily recognise parties here precisely similar to the Established and Free Kirk parties in Scotland, with all their subdivisions of Narrow and Broad, and a small phalanx of Neologians and Rationalists, strong in literary ability, and generally bitter anti-English Republicans, but cordially dreaded and disliked by most of their clerical brethren.

The Church as a body has immense influence, and is generally loyal to the English Crown, after the fashion of Welsh and Highland pastors, not liking the English language or ways, but very loyal to the Sovereign and to all that belongs to Her Majesty's personal authority. . . .

These Dutchmen are slow to move, but bitter and obstinate when roused, and apt to move in an angry crowd. If any number of them join the Republican faction, there will be serious trouble in South Africa, and the drifting may end by these colonies drifting away from the Empire.

Bearing these considerations in mind, many of which, as I have said, are more intelligible to-day than they were twenty years ago, it will be easy to follow the bearings of my narrative of the Transvaal revolt upon the recent crisis in South Africa.

While Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen were away on their mission, Sir Theophilus Shepstone was making a tour through the Transvaal, accompanied by an escort of only forty men, and was everywhere received with as near an approach to enthusiasm as the Boer temperament is capable of manifesting. The cause of the inevitable change is given by Mr. Rider Haggard, who, it cannot be too often repeated, was

[1] The leaven has worked very quickly in twenty years.

an eye-witness of the events which he recorded immediately after the retrocession.

Whilst (he says[1]) annexation was thus well received in the country immediately interested, a lively agitation was commenced in the western province of the Cape Colony, a thousand miles away, with a view of inducing the Home Government to repudiate Sir Theophilus Shepstone's act. The reason of this movement was that the Cape Dutch party, caring little or nothing for the real interests of the Transvaal, did care a great deal about their scheme to turn all the white communities of South Africa into a great Dutch Republic, to which they thought the annexation would be a death-blow.[2] As I have said elsewhere, it must be borne in mind that the strings of the anti-annexation agitation have all along been pulled in the western province, whilst the Transvaal Boers have played the parts of puppets. The instruments used by the leaders of the movement in the Cape were for the most part the discontented and unprincipled Hollander element, a newspaper of an extremely abusive nature, called the *Volksstem*, and another in Natal, known as the *Natal Witness*, lately edited by the notorious Aylward, which has an almost equally unenviable reputation.

And here it is necessary to take stock of the men who first overtly fomented the agitation against British rule. By far the ablest was Aylward, who wrote afterwards an entertaining (but lying) book on the Transvaal. Frere's account of him is given in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Frederick Greenwood, at that time editor of the *St. James's Gazette*, (December 28, 1880):

In 1879, when I was among the Boers in the Transvaal, I found that the real wire-pullers of their committee were foreigners of various nationalities, notably some Hollanders (imbued with German Socialist Republicanism) and an Irishman of the name of Aylward. I was told he was a man of great natural ability, educated as a solicitor, an ex-Fenian, pardoned under another name (Murphy, I think) for turning Queen's evidence against others who had murdered the policeman at Manchester. Migrating to the diamond-fields, he was tried, convicted, and suffered imprisonment there for homicide. When he came out of prison, he betook himself to the Transvaal, and had a command of foreign free-lances under Mr. Burgers, then President of the Transvaal Republic, in his unsuccessful attempt to take Sikukuni's stronghold. After the annexation of the Transvaal he came to England, and published one of the few readable books on the Transvaal, and went out to Natal during the darkest hours of our Zulu troubles seeking employment; but he was an impossible man, and was urging the Boers to rise at the same time that he was offering his services to me and Lord Chelmsford. Finally he settled at Pietermaritzburg, where he was when I last heard of him, as editor of

[1] 'The Last Boer War,' p. 90.

[2] It is important to bear the date of this statement of Mr. Haggard's in mind, for it is a commonplace of the Boer advocate to assert that the idea of a pan-Afrikander conspiracy was an afterthought, designed to cover up the spoor of the Raid. Mr. Haggard's book was written in 1882.

the *Witness*, writing in it English Republicanism and sedition with much ability, especially when opposing the Cape Government and its Governor, whom he never forgave for warning the Boers against following Fenian advice. When I was in the Transvaal, and afterwards, I found him always connected with opposition to the English Government.

Sir Edward Henderson, then in command of the London police, wrote to Frere about Aylward:

I just managed to get a note to Sir Frederick Roberts as he left yesterday morning anent Mr. Aylward. The record of him at Scotland Yard tallies so far entirely with the account recently published in the newspapers. He is a born traitor and conspirator, and would betray and conspire against anyone and anything. There can be no doubt that, to the best of his not inconsiderable ability, he has helped to foster this unhappy movement on the part of the Boers, and incurred an amount of responsibility which may some day prove inconvenient unless he gets a chance to betray them.

And Major John Hope Crealock wrote to Frere about the same time:

A young Irishman named Esk, who knew Aylward in Natal, and who was under my command in the Natal Pioneers, called on me to-night, and told me Aylward formerly used to boast of being a Fenian, and vowed he would pay the English Government off for what he had got by raising the Boers whenever Ireland was rising; and within the last few days he has written to him saying he gloried in being one of the instigators of the present Boer revolt. He wrote from Utrecht.

Amongst Aylward's co-workers was a certain Captain Gunn of Gunn, also of Irish origin, who at the time of the annexation was in prison on various charges, but was released at the instigation of Colonel Weatherley, with whose wife the ex-convict presently eloped. Another was a lawyer who, like Aylward, had got into trouble at the diamond-fields, and was incensed by the refusal of the High Court to allow him to practise as an advocate. A fourth was Celliers, editor of the *Volksstem*, who, on the withdrawal of the Government printing contract, became a violent patriot. It may give some idea of the way in which the 'oracle' was 'worked' to recall the fact that a petition was addressed to Sir Bartle Frere, attacking Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and setting forth the advisability of immediately suspending him, and temporarily appointing, and recommending for Her Majesty's royal and favourable consideration, an English gentleman 'of high integrity and honour, in whom

the country at large has respect and confidence.'[1] To this petition no less than 3,883 signatures were attached, sixteen of which investigation proved to be genuine, five doubtful, and all the rest fictitious.

> 'The ingenuity,' says Mr. Rider Haggard, 'exercised by the author or authors was really very remarkable; for it must be remembered that not one of the signatures was forged, they were all invented, and had, of course, to be written in a great variety of hands. The plan pursued was to put down the names of people living in the country with slight variation. Thus De Villiers became De Williers and Vanzyl became Vanzul. I remember that my own name appeared on one of the petitions with some slight alteration. Some of the names were evidently meant to be facetious. Thus, there was a Jan Verneuker, which means John the Cheat.'

So the 'agitation' went on, though, with the exception of Kruger himself and one of the Prinsloos, very few burghers seem to have been in touch with it. On January 1, 1878, however, Kruger wrote Shepstone a letter:[2]

On my return to this country, I discovered with many of my countrymen a spirit of excitement and dissatisfaction on account of this alleged majority (in favour of annexation), and as I was sorry for my countrymen, and was afraid that they would adopt a wrong course, I did not hesitate to direct my countrymen to clearly indicate the majority to Lord Carnarvon in a petition. In case the majority should be for annexation, I very openly stated that I am prepared to stoop under and obey the authority of the Queen of England, and it appears to me that I shall succeed in moving my countrymen also thereto. Although not a few of my countrymen were very excited, and would not have hesitated to regain their liberty with their blood, it is however pleasant to me to inform you that it appears to me that I shall be able to bring the people to adopt the before-stated calm measure, and that I shall succeed to convince my countrymen to reach their independence by a peaceful course.

To this, Mr. Osborn, Secretary to the Government of the Transvaal, replied as follows:[3]

In setting on foot, as you have done, a plan to obtain a general vote of the people on the question of annexation, although that plan is veiled

[1] This was Colonel Weatherley, the dupe of the others; he apologized to Sir Theophilus Shepstone for the part he had been induced to play in the agitation, and died as 'an English gentleman of high integrity and of honour,' fighting his country's foes on the Kambula.

[2] C. 2100, p. 26.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

under the plausible pretext of signing a memorial to Her Majesty the Queen, you must be aware that you have acted in direct opposition to the decision more than once conveyed to you personally by the highest authority, and you must be equally well aware that the signatures to such a memorial will not represent the real feelings of those who sign it; on the one hand, a knowledge that the signing of a memorial to the Queen is the exercise of a constitutional privilege, and therefore that such signing s not likely to be resented by the Government; and on the other a desire for quiet, fear of the consequences of not signing, which are more or less clearly indicated by those charged to procure signatures, and of which I have already heard loud complaints, will most probably show a large majority against annexation; then you are by your own programme brought face to face with the alternative of undertaking overt action against Her Majesty's Government.

It must be borne in mind that after the return of the first deputation Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen were retained in the service of the Government. Dr. Jorissen, who had acted as Attorney-General, was quite ignorant of the law. He had been, it will be remembered, a minister; he had been more than once reprimanded by the Bench; he was now retired on a liberal pension. Mr. Kruger was dismissed for taking part in an agitation which was manifestly inconsistent with an official position. For more reasons than one the official letter, in which Mr. Osborn communicated his dismissal to Mr. Kruger, deserves preservation:

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
TO THE GOVERNMENT,
TRANSVAAL,
May 20, 1878.

SIR,

I am directed by the Administrator to inform you that, in accordance with the provisions of the law under which you were appointed a member of the Executive Council, your tenure of that office expired on the 4th of November last.

After the line of conduct which you have thought it right to pursue with regard to this Government, and especially after the undisguised notification which you have given it in the letter addressed by you and Mr. Joubert of the 14th instant[1] to the Administrator, that you intend to

[1] The letter referred to was one handed to Sir Theophilus Shepstone by Mr. Kruger and Mr. Joubert an hour or so before their (second) departure for England. In it they indicated their intention not to abide by the result of their mission should it be adverse to the object they had in view, and declared that the annexation had failed to bring about the promised success and welfare. They described the state of things as 'threatening danger and general ruin,' which in their opinion could be averted only 'by justice being done to our country and people.' In forwarding this letter to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Theophilus Shepstone said: 'The only act which, from their point of view, would be a measure of justice sufficient to prevent the calamity to which they allude, is the re-transfer of the Transvaal to them.' In his reply to Mr. Kruger and Mr. Joubert, Sir Theophilus Shepstone wrote: 'With regard to the danger and ruin to which you point as certain to follow the refusal of Her Majesty's Government

persevere in an agitation that threatens, as you yourself believe, danger and ruin to the country, His Excellency sees no advantage, and does not feel justified, in suspending the operation of the law any longer for the purpose of enabling you to retain that office and the pay attached to it. I am also under the necessity of calling your attention to the fact that on the 8th of January last, when you personally applied to me at Pretoria to be paid the arrear salary due to you, which, according to law, was at the rate of £200 a year, you demanded salary at the rate of £300, on the ground that you had been promised that increased rate before your first departure for Europe, and that, relying upon your word, and influenced by your urgency, as well as by a desire to avoid the appearance even of any breach of faith on the part of His Excellency, who was then absent from the seat of government, I paid you at this increased rate without further question and without authority. I now find that the only ground you had for preferring this claim was a private conversation with the Administrator, in which you complained that your salary was inadequate, whereupon he told you that he wished to retain your services to aid the new Government, and that he would recommend that you should be retained permanently as a member of the Executive Council, to be called upon for your advice when required, at a salary of £300 per annum instead of the £200 to which you then were entitled.

The reply you made was that you were a representative man, and must act according to the feelings of those you represented, but that when you were relieved from those trammels you could act according to your own convictions. You neither accepted nor rejected the proposal, and nothing has since passed to renew or confirm it, therefore you were not justified in making the demand you did, and I have made myself responsible for the payment to you without authority of the amount in excess of your usual salary.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) M. OSBORN,
Secretary to the Government.

This letter was addressed to S. J. P. Kruger, Esq., and was possibly the last he received with this conventional addition. Mr. Joubert had refused throughout either to accept an official position or to draw any salary from the Government.

In the earlier days of our relations with the Transvaal Boers, we failed to understand the interpretation which they placed upon the license accorded to discussion and agitation so long as it confined itself within what in Great Britain would have been considered constitutional limits. When the Boers held meetings to protest against annexation, they

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to withdraw from the Transvaal, I feel that I should not be doing my duty . . . if I hesitated for a moment to express to you my deliberate opinion, formed upon sufficient knowledge and observation, that upon the conduct of you two gentlemen will the momentous issue you describe entirely depend. No two men in the Transvaal have done more to make the general ruin you deprecate possible than you have, and upon no shoulders will the responsibility of averting it press so heavily as upon yours' (Pratt, 'Leading Points in South African History,' pp. 86, 87).

thought that the Government refrained from interference because it was afraid of them. Thus Shepstone to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (May 8, 1878):

There are many persons in the Transvaal, mostly adventurers, superior in intelligence and education to the general population, and many in the adjoining and neighbouring territories, who, some from political, others from personal motives, made the most of the opportunity offered by this excitement (that is, the return of Kruger and Jorissen from their first mission) to create disaffection amongst the Boers, and to goad them on, if possible, to the commission of acts of open violence against the Government. The Boers had either forgotten or had never, many of them, apprehended the gravity of the position in which the late Republic stood before the annexation. They were at the time suddenly relieved by that measure from a sense of responsibility that pressed heavily upon them, but were in some cases unwilling, in others, perhaps, unable, to refer the relief to its true cause. Then, again, their pride was continually offended by the taunt that their country had been taken from them by an 'elderly gentleman, accompanied by only twenty-five men,' and that they had not struck a blow to save it. Added to these considerations is the traditional but deeply-rooted hatred of the English name which still exists in many families in the Transvaal, and there is also the practical unrestraint of twenty-five years. . . . In many instances Boers and others apply to me for advice and direction. Some said they had signed a petition because they would have become marked men had they refused, others that they were forced by threats, and others, again, that they had signed because it appeared to them to be the surest way to a peaceful ending.

Again, with regard to the agitation itself and to the meeting, which resulted in the departure of the second deputation to England, Sir Theophilus wrote to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (May 8, 1878):

I do not know what course you will decide upon to adopt with regard to the present mission. It is not, as was the case with the former one, a deputation sent by the Government and people upon learning that annexation had been determined upon; it is the outcome of a meeting at a farm of a number of persons, variously estimated at from 500 to 1,100, who themselves contributed, and undertook to collect contributions, to defray the cost, and the object of the mission is to procure the withdrawal of the Act of Annexation. I beg to be allowed to suggest that the interests and quiet of the country demand that a decided answer be given, whatever that answer may be. It is possible that a refusal to grant the request which these delegates are charged to make may provoke more active resistance than has yet been shown to the Government, though I scarcely think it probable. It is certain, however, that another wave of excitement will be raised, which I am of opinion will have to be treated more decidedly than I have felt at liberty to treat the one that has just resolved itself into sending three gentlemen to England.

At a little earlier date than that of this despatch, Sir Theophilus wrote to the late M. W. Pretorius as an 'old

friend,' and warned him of the consequences of his excited and seditious language.

It is a source of deep regret (he said, writing through Mr. Osborn, the Secretary) to His Excellency to have to speak in this language to so old a friend, and he does so only in the hope that, while there is yet time, you may try and remedy the mischief you are said already to have done. I am directed to refer you to His Excellency's proclamation, a copy of which will be addressed to you. It says but little for the honour of some of the Afrikander race in the Transvaal that they should do their utmost to stir each other up to sedition and rebellion against the Government at a moment when native disturbances are threatening all round, and, worse still, that Afrikanders can be found base enough to encourage native chiefs in their aggression upon their white fellows, for the purpose of embarrassing the Government. His Excellency desires me to beg of you to consider well the end of the course upon which you have entered. Upon you rests immense responsibility, and remember that your own countrymen, some of whom are now so loudly applauding you, will be the first to cast upon you the blame of the misery your conduct is calculated to bring about. His Excellency begs of you not for a moment to believe the designing insinuations upon which you seem to be building your plans —that the annexation of this country is capable of being revoked. It is irrevocable. Pray be warned in time.

At this time something occurred which, though it cannot be said to have caused, undoubtedly aggravated, the conditions which precipitated the rebellion. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach desired to confer personally with Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and had instructed him, 'Unless any circumstances appear specially to demand your continued presence in the province,' to return to England, 'and complete the leave of absence which was interrupted by your mission to the Transvaal in 1876,' leaving Colonel (afterwards Sir Owen) Lanyon, who had been Administrator in Griqualand West, to act as temporary administrator. The change was unfortunate. Shepstone had many of the defects of the Afrikander character. He was reserved, even with his own superiors, somewhat restive under control, and had ideas on the question of expenditure which shocked the Treasury. On the other hand, there was no one who knew the natives and the Boers so well, and there was never any question as to his loyalty and devotion. Mr. Carter, whose narrative of the Boer War is accepted by pro-Boers as impartial, writes thus of him:[1]

Sir Theophilus Shepstone undoubtedly was highly esteemed by the Boers. The best proof of that, perhaps, is to be found in the fact that, as

[1] 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 47

recently as the year 1880, Joubert stated that the Boers would be willing to accept Shepstone as their President, granted certain reforms in the administration of the Transvaal of that time. Shepstone thoroughly understood the Boer character, and in this respect he resembled President Brand of the Free State. To converse in a friendly way with the people, no matter how humble the man, to be attentive to all their small conversation—in fact, to hob-nob with every comer who is a respectable burgher, is essential to the popularity of any administrator in the Transvaal or ruler over the Dutch in this part of South Africa. The orthodox military man, somewhat pompous and a trifle haughty to inferiors, is the man of all others the Boer will despise and hate. However clever, just, and impartial he may be, that matters nothing. If he assumes airs, or even if it is natural to him to carry his head proudly, he will never be a favourite with the Boers. They must be spoken to as one friend speaks to another. Lofty manners and speech raise their contempt, and fail to overawe them in the slightest degree.[1]

Sir Owen was a typical British soldier with all his merits and defects. To these disadvantages, which were those of his class, was added one for which, personal as it was, he could hardly be held responsible. I quote Mr. Carter once more:[2]

As an instance of how slight a pretext is sufficient to insure the animosity of the more ignorant Boers, I mention that one of the reasons I myself frequently heard the Boers assign for disliking Lanyon was that 'he was nothing but a nigger.' Colonel Lanyon is a dark-complexioned man, and service in the West Indies and in other hot climates had considerably bronzed his face. On this evidence the Boers came to the conclusion he was a 'nigger,' and, ridiculous as the statement may appear, it is nevertheless a fact that this consideration weighed heavily in the minds of hundreds of the people, and helped to confirm his unpopularity among them.

Messrs Kruger and Joubert arrived in England on their second mission in July, and on the tenth of that month addressed a memorial to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach from the Albemarle Hotel, London. It is an argumentative document of some length, and traverses the grounds of annexation set forth by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. Not the least significant feature is the reliance upon a sentence or two of Mr. Froude's[3]

[1] According to the Boer convention to omit to shake hands on meeting is a piece of deliberate incivility. Upon one of our conventions that of being 'not at home' when you are in fact engaged or otherwise indisposed to receive callers, they share the not unnatural misunderstanding of untrained domestics. A friend of mine found upon inquiry among Transvaalers who had known Colonel Lanyon that his habit of thus denying himself had given real offence.

[2] 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 79.

[3] From Froude's time downwards the Boers have relied largely upon Englishmen hostile to their own government. Of the argumentative missiles hurled at Great Britain about this time, a considerable proportion bore the trade mark of Messrs. Froude, Colenso, and Gladstone.

for the general discredit of the Imperial Government's South African policy.

Here is the conclusion of the Messrs. Kruger-Joubert memorial:

We are directed to support[1] with the voice of the people[2] the protest against the annexation, and at the same time humbly and earnestly to solicit Her Majesty's gracious consideration of their cause. We protest against the annexation of the South African Republic on the following grounds: 1. That it is a violation of the Convention entered into at Sand River in January, 1852, between Her Majesty's assistant commissioners and the representatives of the emigrant farmers. 2. That the reports as to the nature of the disturbances in the Transvaal and the peril to the peace and safety of the adjoining colonies thereby threatened, and upon which the instructions to Sir Theophilus Shepstone were founded, were gross exaggerations of fact, and misrepresented the actual condition of the country. 3. That the condition laid down in Her Majesty's Commission to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, requiring the assent of the inhabitants thereof, or of a sufficient number of them, or the legislature thereof, has not been complied with. 4. That the British Government cannot with justice avail themselves of the plea that the defencelessness and disorganization of the Republic and the encroachments of the natives and consequent danger to British colonies made the intervention of their authority a necessary act, inasmuch as those evils, if they existed, were the direct result and consequence of the acts of their own representatives as above referred to.[3] In concluding a letter upon a subject of such vital importance to our fellow-countrymen, to those who have struggled through toil and through danger for years in the one hope of preserving their hard-earned freedom, we cannot but feel the deep responsibility that rests upon us, and that should we fail in conveying to Her Majesty's Government the conviction of the righteousness and justice of our cause, it will be due only to our defects in laying it before them. We believe, however, that we have fully met every argument that has been advanced to justify the act for which we now seek redress, and we rest with the fullest confidence on the sense of justice and integrity of the British nation. We know that as a subject people, and [*sic*] who have been deprived of their independence by such means, there will lie before us many years of bitter heart-burnings, of ill-feeling, of desertion of homes, and of wild and objectless wanderings; while on the other hand, with justice and with freedom, there is every reason to hope that the Transvaal may join hand in hand with the neighbouring States and colonies to work together for mutual prosperity and happiness and for the extension of civilization and Christianity into the far interior. It is now our earnest prayer that Her Majesty's Government may direct the removal from the Transvaal of the Administrator of the Government, with the British troops and the official staff, and may restore to the country the independence which was guaranteed by the Convention of 1852, and which has been formally

[1] C. 2128.

[2] It is curious to note how conservative the Boers are even in their most revolutionary moods. The phrase 'the voice of the people' was borrowed from the pioneers of the French Revolution, and made its appearance in South Africa in speeches of certain Jacobin Dutchmen against the administration of the Dutch East India Company prior to the English occupation of Cape Town. Its birthplace in South Africa was, appropriately enough, Graaff Reinet.

[3] The reference is to the annexation of the diamond-fields.

acknowledged by the Governments of Germany, France, America Holland, Belgium, and Portugal.

On August 6, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach returned an answer justifying the policy of the Imperial Government. After noting some of the less important issues raised, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach says :[1]

When in 1852 the independence of the emigrant farmers was recognised by the Sand River Convention, it was no doubt anticipated that they would be able to establish a prudent and stable government, such as would be a bulwark against, rather than a source of, native troubles in the rest of South Africa.

There was therefore of course at that time no apprehension of any such combination of circumstances as might necessitate the establishment of British authority beyond the Vaal. That the recognition of the new Republic was subject to such an implied reservation as Sir Theophilus Shepstone has well described cannot be doubted ; but that such reservation should not be specifically expressed in the Convention is only in accordance with what might be expected, having regard to the nature of the instrument. There was no need in such a Convention to declare that it might be necessary to resume what was granted, in the event of the community, to whom the concession was granted, failing to answer the expectations which had been formed. That circumstances of provocation or necessity are conceivable, which would have justified the British Government in establishing its authority north of the Vaal, notwithstanding the Convention made with the emigrants, you will yourselves probably admit.

The question is whether such circumstances had arisen when Sir Theophilus Shepstone issued his proclamation, and this is a question which Her Majesty's Government, while determined fairly and liberally to carry out its engagements to the utmost possible extent, claims, as the Paramount Power in South Africa and responsible in the last resort for its peace and safety, to be alone entitled to answer.

How patiently and how loyally the British Government endeavoured to maintain the Convention of 1852 the history of the last twenty years will attest. They adhered to it, notwithstanding the child-stealing practices of the northern provinces, which amounted to a violation of the Convention, and which evoked strong indignation both at home and in South Africa.

They adhered to it in spite of the unwarranted proclamation of vast annexations in 1868, which purported to usurp large tracts of the African continent even up to Lake Ngami, with which the emigrant farmers could have no concern, and over which they could have no shadow of title.

They adhered to it also, notwithstanding the repudiation by the Republic of the Keate Award in the Bloemhof Arbitration,[2] to which the head of the State had voluntarily submitted ; notwithstanding the subsequent attempts to appropriate the country of the Batlapins and Baralongs, to the great injury, both directly and indirectly, of the province of Griqualand West, and notwithstanding the attempt to assume a protectorate over the Amaswasi, a step profoundly distasteful to the Natal Government on account of its effects upon the Zulus.

I am aware that, in regard to these matters, the late President has placed on record his explanations. These explanations were, however,

[1] C. 2138, p. 17.

[2] About the diamond-fields.

altogether unsatisfactory, and I now refer to the point, not for the purpose of reopening old discussions, but because these transactions show how far the British Government was from considering that any endurable amount of annoyances and provocations received from the Republican Government justified it in withdrawing the concessions which had been granted.

It was not until the collapse of that Government seemed to threaten immediate and general disaster that the British Government stepped in to assume the reins of authority, in a district where the preceding government had in all but name ceased to exist.

Turning to another point, I observe that it is suggested in your memorial that it was only by the advance of the British troops into the Transvaal that Cetewayo was led to make a similar movement towards the frontier.

This statement would seem to imply that Cetewayo would have been more ready to go to war with Great Britain than with the Transvaal Republic.

It is difficult to argue about circumstances which did not occur; but it appears to me that there are very strong grounds for the belief that, if the British troops had not advanced into the Transvaal, Cetewayo would before now have invaded and occupied it.

I cannot quit this portion of the subject which relates to Cetewayo without expressing a hope that you would be anxious, should such a construction be put upon your language, to repudiate any intention to suggest that Sir Theophilus Shepstone encouraged Cetewayo in hostility to the Transvaal.[1] As a matter of fact, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, while he was acting as an officer of the Natal Government, restrained Cetewayo in past years in his hostility to the Transvaal, and for this the Transvaal community owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sir Theophilus Shepstone and to the Natal Government.

The fact to which you refer, that the emigrant farmers many years ago defeated Dingaan, is far from proving that they are now able to contend with Cetewayo, because the acquisition of firearms by the natives has essentially altered the condition of Kaffir wars; and the circumstances of the Basuto war, which you also mention, are rather to be taken as showing how much more effectively this country can deal with native difficulties.

In that case the reverse sustained by the British arms in the first instance was before long fully retrieved, and their supremacy finally asserted.

In the case of the Sikukuni war, however, when the first attack failed, the effective force of the Republic melted away and could not be replaced, so that the Government of the Transvaal remained practically defenceless against the numerous enemies which it had provoked.

There is also a misapprehension in your letter, which must so materially affect the justice of your views on South African politics that I could not, in fairness to you, pass it over in silence.

[1] See Rider Haggard, 'Last Boer War,' p. 64. Speaking of the accusations brought against the manner of the annexation and the officers who carried it out, Mr. Haggard says: 'No doubt, both for party purposes and from personal animus, every means, fair or foul, has been used to discredit it and all connected with it. To take a single instance, one writer (Miss Colenso, "History of the Zulu War," p. 134) actually goes the length of putting a portion of a speech made by President Burgers into the mouth of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and then abusing him for his incredible profanity. Surely this exceeds the limit of fair criticism.' As Sir Theophilus Shepstone himself says: 'Such play with such keen-edged tools as the excited passions of savages are, and especially such savages as I knew the Zulus to be, is not what an experience of forty-two years in managing them inclined me to.'

You observe that 'it should be borne in mind that, as a rule, all information possessed by the Home and Colonial Governments or by the British public is derived from Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and that all opinions on the same are but a reflection of his.' You did not specify to what subjects you suppose that Sir Theophilus Shepstone's authority extends in the eyes of the Government and public, but you refer, no doubt, mainly to native affairs and the affairs of the two Dutch communities. I can only say, in reply, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone is but one among a great number of those to whom the Government and the public look for information and advice in forming their opinions on these subjects. In no branch of public affairs has Sir Theophilus Shepstone been less actively engaged, until lately, than in affairs connected with the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Reference to the Parliamentary papers of recent years would make it apparent that it is chiefly with Her Majesty's High Commissioner that Her Majesty's Government has carried on correspondence relating to the Transvaal. And, even in his own special department, Sir Theophilus Shepstone would be the last to claim that weight should be attached to information which he might give or opinions which he might express, except in so far as they might be supported by evidence and reasoning.

I have now explained as fully as the circumstances appear to me to require the reasons for which it is not possible to entertain the request which you have been deputed to prefer, and also the reasons which prevent me from concurring in several of the representations made in your letter. I cannot, however, in conclusion, refrain from expressing the great regret with which I have observed the statement in the memorial that the memorialists are 'trying the last means to obtain their end by peaceable measures,' and that 'the people will not be subject to any power whatsoever.' I cannot believe that your fellow-countrymen would attempt to resist by force a Government duly established in the country in which they dwell, more especially when that Government is just and considerate, and preserves to the utmost those customs and institutions to which the people are attached. The experience of this Empire, which comprises amongst the Queen's most loyal subjects not only great numbers of Dutch, but also French and Germans and persons of almost every nationality, forbids me to entertain seriously any such idea. It is none the less my duty to warn you of the grave responsibility incurred, not only by those who would have recourse to any other than peaceable measures, but perhaps even more by all who, having full knowledge of the circumstances, fail to do the utmost in their power to dissuade the more ignorant and excitable portion of the community from so calamitous a course.

I gladly leave this subject in order to assure you of the warm interest felt by Her Majesty's Government in the moral and material welfare of the Transvaal, and their desire to promote it by every means in their power. I am anxious to secure your co-operation, and that of those on whose behalf you have addressed me, in an endeavour to arrive at some full and satisfactory understanding respecting the future of your country; and especially as to the principles upon which it may be possible to base a constitutional and administrative system, which may preserve many of the most valued institutions of the Transvaal under the protection and supervision afforded by the Queen's sovereignty.

The people of the province were clearly informed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone in his Proclamation that 'the Transvaal would remain a separate Government with its own laws and legislature; and that it was the wish of Her most gracious Majesty that it should enjoy the fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the country and

the intelligence of its people.' You are aware that the present system of government, though continued in consequence of the unsettled state of the country for a longer term than has been contemplated, is altogether temporary and provisional. It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that no time shall be lost in carrying out the promises given in the proclamation, so as to satisfy the wishes of those who deprecate any avoidable departure from the old constitution of the country. Whether it will be in their power to proceed at once with that policy depends in a great measure upon you and upon all over whom you have influence. I earnestly recommend you, and those on whose behalf you act, to turn your attention from that which is impossible to those much needed reforms and undertakings on the necessity of which all are agreed, and to cooperate loyally and heartily with Her Majesty's Government in concerting such measures as may make the Transvaal a prosperous, content, and self-supporting country.

On their return after this answer from England, Messrs. Kruger and Joubert passed through Natal, and at Frere's suggestion were consulted by Lord Chelmsford as to native tactics and the best means of dealing with them. A large proportion of the more ignorant Boers saw in the war with Cetewayo a twofold advantage to themselves. First and foremost, they recognised that England must, and would, fight the matter to the end, and that that end would be the destruction of a militarism which was a perpetual nightmare to them. The abolition of this living and dreadful menace withdrew one of the most potent motives for their acquiescing in annexation. From their earliest history they had been opposed to government in any form, except in so far as was necessary for purposes of combination against a common foe. That common foe was stricken down for ever on the field of Ulundi, and with its extinction went the necessity for an organized government, least of all for a government on English lines, administered by English agents. In the second place, the disasters sustained by England in the earlier stages of the Zulu War had diminished the not very extravagant ideas they entertained of our prowess in the field; and they believed, and were taught to believe by enemies of the Imperial Government, as they have been taught more recently that England would sicken, as she had sickened before, of the expense in blood and money, and of the constant worry entailed by the assertion of her paramountcy. They held that a little active resistance would induce us to rid ourselves of a troublesome dependency, and this belief was presently strengthened by

the appearance of Mr. Gladstone on the political platform as the advocate of Boer independence. Two despatches of Frere's, written in April, 1879, on his way to Pretoria, state the situation with that clearness and precision which characterize his work. Writing from Standerton on April 6, he says:

I was particularly impressed by the replies of a very fine specimen of a Boer of the old school. He had been six weeks in an English prison, daily expecting execution as a rebel, and had been wounded by all the enemies against whom his countrymen had fought—English, Zulus, Basutos, Griquas, and Bushmen. But he said, 'That was in the days of my youth and inexperience. Had I known then what I know now, I would never have fought against the English, and I will never fight them again. Old as I am, I would now gladly turn out against the Zulus and take fifty friends of mine who would follow me anywhere; but I dare not leave my home till assured it will not be destroyed and my property carried off in my absence by the men who call me rebel because I will not join them against the Government. My wife, brought up like a civilized woman in the Cape Colony, has had five times in her life to run from the house and sleep in the veldt when attacked by Zulus and Basutos. One of our twelve sons was assegaied in sight of our house within the last ten years by a marauding party, and in my absence from the house, when it was surrounded by Basutos, my wife had to fly in the night by herself, leading one child and carrying another on her back. She walked nearly fifty miles through the lion veld, seeing three lions on the way before she reached a place of safety. It is not likely we should forget such things nor wish them to recur; but how can I leave her on my farm and go to Zululand when the malcontent leaders threaten me that if I go they will burn my house and drive off all my stock? Assure me that we are not to be deserted by the English Government and left to the mercy of these malcontent adventurers, and I and my people will gladly turn out to assist Colonel Wood.' I find that this idea that the English Government will give up the Transvaal as it formerly did the Orange Free State has been industriously propagated, and has taken great hold on the minds of the well-disposed Boers. It is, I believe, one of the main causes of reluctance to support the Government actively. They argue that what has been done before may be done again, and they have no feeling of assurance that if they stand by the English Government to-day they will not be left to bear the brunt of the malcontents' vengeance when the Republic is established.

The second despatch was written almost immediately afterwards (May 19) from Heidelburg:

Along the whole road since I entered theTransvaal I have met with unquestionable evidence of the terrorism exercised by the malcontents to induce their moderate and loyal neighbours to join the meeting simply to swell its numbers. I have met Boers of the neighbourhood at every halting-place, and in numbers along the road, and we rarely parted without one or more of them begging for a few words in private and asking me 'what he was to do in face of the threats used by malcontents to induce him to join them.' No sooner was he assured that the law would

be supported in protecting them against intimidation and violence than he would bring his fellows to hear the good news. In the few cases where the elder men were not present at the farms we visited, the wives would account for their absence at the meeting with evident regret, and hint that they had not gone willingly or with any disloyal intent, but through fear or curiosity, or to prevent any breach of the peace.

If I might judge from what I myself have heard and seen during the last ten days since I entered the Transvaal, I should say that but a small portion of those who live within reach of the line I travelled had gone to the meeting, and that most of those had attended from motives other than a real wish to see the act of annexation reversed.

Almost everyone complained of the want of protection against the intimidation, but they generally added their testimony of substantial improvements in administration since the country was annexed. 'The officials are regularly paid and diligent in the discharge of their duties;' 'they no longer afford or deny redress according as the applicant has voted for or against them when elected to office;' 'the law is justly administered;' 'prices are better;' 'there is money now which they never used to see;' 'and everyone would thrive if only assured of peace and freedom from scares of Zulu or Basuto impis, or visits from malcontents, whose threats peaceable and loyal men feared more than Zulu inroads.'

The idea that we should be somehow compelled or induced to abandon the country had taken great hold on the minds of some of the more intelligent men that I met. It has been sedulously written up by a portion of the South African press, English as well as Dutch. I marked its effect particularly on men who said they had come from the old colony since the annexation, but would never have done so had they believed that English rule would be withdrawn and the country left to its former state of anarchy. But there is a great[1] practical difficulty in conveying to the mass of the people any idea of the real power of Government.

The leaders have no wish that the truth should be known till they have displayed to me their own numbers. Stories of Zulu triumph and of our insuperable difficulties in Zululand have been sedulously circulated. . . . The Boers have lately, with the avowed purpose of providing more pasture for their cattle, moved their camp closer to Pretoria, giving thereby some colour to the reports that they intended trying to blockade the town and cutting off the supplies. . . . It is said that a party estimated at various numbers above eighty are determined on violent courses under the guidance of Solomon Prinsloo. This man . . . is one of the persons generally charged with invoking the aid of native tribes to expel the English. It is obvious that, unless some change in the position or intention of the encamped Boers takes place, they can no longer be regarded as a harmless or lawful assembly, and a very slight indiscretion on either side may lead to civil bloodshed.

The desire to do anything in my power to avert such a calamity induces me to risk more than I should otherwise think prudent. From what I have seen of the Boer character, I have much hope of success,

[1] At the time at which this was written (end of May, 1901) I had just received a visit from Mr. Rose-Innes, K.C., Chief-Justice-elect of the Transvaal. He told me how great his sympathy was for those former British subjects who, after the restoration of the independence of the Transvaal, had become burghers of the South African Republic; they had suffered much originally from the withdrawal of British protection, and after they had obtained the rights of citizenship a very large number of them felt bound in honour to fight for the Republic, though their sympathies, in spite of their desertion, were with the English.

and should I fail, it will, I think, be impossible to say that any possible means of averting civil strife have been neglected.

The camp to which Sir Bartle referred consisted of some 4,000 armed Boers, and was pitched on the road from Newcastle, in Natal, to Pretoria, between the latter town and Heidelburg. Mail-carts were stopped, insulting and threatening language was used to travellers, and no doubt was expressed as to the intention to resort to rebellion unless independence were restored.

> It was very characteristic of Sir Bartle that he insisted on riding into the Boer camp[1] practically unaccompanied. The camps were pitched on a slope by the roadside. Three or four hundred waggons were drawn up, not in a laager of defence, but without order, except that a wide passage led through their midst. On either side of this passage stood the Boers in a row two or three deep, in number about 1,200. All told, there were about 1,500 or 1,600, and not the reported 4,000. Frere drew rein, and entered in advance of his party and alone, riding slowly between the lines of men, and as he went by he raised his hand to his sun-helmet in salute. Not a man acknowledged it; they stood, their eyes fixed on him as he passed, in moody and surly silence. But these were chiefly the younger and the more ill-mannered, and as he proceeded, rejoined now by his companions, he came to a couple of hundred older men grouped round the Committee's tent. These received him coldly, but with all due courtesy and respect. He was asked what he would drink, and on his replying 'Coffee,' thinking, as it was the common drink of the country, it would be most easily obtainable, Stegmann[2] perceived a slight embarrassment, and, guessing the cause—that none was prepared—whispered to Frere to ask for champagne. It was readily provided. The scene which followed reads like an episode in Homer. Upon Frere's demeanour, upon what he said and did within the next hour, might not improbably, as he knew, hang peace or civil war.
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> At a table in a large tent laid open on one side he took his seat, with his staff. On each side, or in front

[1] Martineau, 'Life of Sir Bartle Frere.'

[2] A loyal Dutchman who accompanied Sir Bartle Frere and acted as interpreter.

of him, were the members of the Committee, and in the opening of the tent, and for a long distance beyond, was a vista of intent faces. Unable to speak to his hearers in their own language, all he said had to be interpreted by Stegmann and repeated sentence by sentence. This deprived him of any rhetorical advantage, and for that very reason may have led his hearers to study his face and expression the closer.

He was now in his sixty-fourth year. Age had whitened his hair, but had little enfeebled him, and had dimmed none of the brightness of his eye; nothing weakened his expression of intelligence, calm will, and genial frankness. His face, though worn, was comparatively little changed, but years of ceaseless mental strain, and especially the wearing anxiety of the last eighteen months, had touched the delicately-cut features with a greater refinement and a graver expression than of old.

He explained the circumstances of his coming, and told his hearers of the warnings he had received, and that, nevertheless, as they saw, he had come without a single soldier in his guard. After he had been speaking for some time, he referred to the message which at an interview at Maritzburg he had given to Joubert, in writing as well as by word of mouth, to deliver to them.

'But we did not understand this,' the chairman (Pretorius) said; 'we never heard of it.'

'Send and fetch Joubert,' was Frere's reply.

Joubert was not in the tent, and for some time was not to be found, and 'Piet Joubert!' was called all over the camp. At last, after some wrangling, he came, reluctant and shame-faced, into the tent.

'Did I tell you so-and-so?' Frere asked him.

'Yes.'

'Did you understand it, and that you were to give it as a message?'

'Yes.'

'Then, how dared you fail to deliver the message that I gave you? You may leave the tent; I have done with you.'

To those who know the Boers, there is no need of saying that this abrupt method of dealing with Joubert, instead of exciting ill-feeling, greatly increased their respect for Sir Bartle Frere.

It is essential for many reasons that I should give Frere's

address to the Committee at length, because it defines the position taken up by the Imperial Government, and its contents and promises were thoroughly known to Mr. Gladstone's Government when, a couple years later, they resolved upon what I have called Majubanimity.

> 'I will,' said the High Commissioner,[1] 'tell you what occurs to me on the subject; but I must say that I am disappointed that you do not speak out more plainly and say what you wish me to do. You know that I am Her Majesty's High Commissioner, sent out here to see that all her colonies in South Africa are defended from infringement and from being assailed by any enemy. I have come up here unattended, because I do not wish to have any other weapons than those of reason and right with me. I think you have made some great mistakes, and that you have got into a very dangerous position by bad advice, and I should be very glad if any knowledge or experience that I have or any power that the Queen has given me can help you out of that position, and enable you to get what I consider is meant by independence. I am afraid that I and some of you may not exactly agree as to what is right and what is freedom and what is independence, and so you must pardon me, as you do not say much on the subject yourselves, if I repeat to you what you perhaps already know. We come of the same stock—one of the most honoured stocks of all white men; we hold the same religion, and hope to be guided by the same Word of God; but, of course, different men see things with different eyes, and, therefore, if I am tedious in telling you what you already know and have already felt, I hope you will excuse me. The first thing that I was assured before I came up here was that the whole of the people were unanimous on this matter. I never, till I came to the Transvaal, had any reason to doubt —if your delegates and some of the public prints were to be believed—but that the burgher population were all united in this matter. But many gentlemen from different parts have told me, since I entered the Transvaal, that you are not unanimous; so I took a good deal of pains to inform myself on this subject, and the

[1] The speech will be found in Carter's 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 56 *et seq.*

result has been this: that, unless very few of those gentlemen spoke the truth, the press has been entirely misinformed and misled as to the numbers and unanimity of those who take part in this movement. I had not entered the Transvaal before I was met by people from the Transvaal telling me this, and all the way along I have never passed a single day without meeting a number of Dutch burghers who told me they had not taken part in this movement. I asked them no questions; they volunteered the information themselves. I have had a man rush into my bedroom and ask me in Dutch whether the Government intended to do such a thing as to give back the Transvaal. He said that he and all his neighbours were opposed to this movement. I have had men from waggons outspanned in the veld riding up to speak to me on the road. All these were Dutchmen, recollect, not Englishmen — good Dutch farmers, respectable men, and this every day without exception along my road. They told me they did not want the old Government again, that they only wanted a good firm Government, that they had prospered since the annexation and did not wish to be undone. Again, I found without any exception in every farmhouse I entered evidence of the intimidation used to make people join this meeting. I tell you what I saw and heard myself every day since I came into the Transvaal. Now, gentlemen, you know that a great many people abstain from telling you the truth; but if I am cut into pieces nobody shall get anything but the truth out of me. Women have come to me, and said, "There is my poor husband out there in the camp; I hope they will soon send him home." "Why did he go into the camp?" "Because they threatened to shoot him and cut him into pieces and make biltong of him. And am I to sit quietly in my house while my good man is there?" And this was also told me by women, wives and mothers of Boers, good men and true, who said they could not sleep safely in their beds. Men have come to me and said, "Give me notice if you are going to give the country up, and I will leave it." Thus, I find that not only was violence threatened to men to bring them—and you know that this is true—but you pitch your camp close to the road and pull up travellers. This you have done, not the leaders and the elders, but foolish young fellows who may get into

fatal quarrels with somebody who may pass this way. I have found men who have made contracts for telegraph-poles unable to perform their contracts because intimidated and carried off to the camp. Now I will tell you why I mention these things to you: because I know that generally burghers do not study the law. But there are men among you who know the law sufficiently well to tell you what is the consequence of acts like these; that fine and imprisonment for doing what has already been done is the legal punishment; that if by chance some foolish fellow were to let off a gun and shoot somebody, it might be much more serious for all concerned in bringing such people together. And it is my duty to tell you what is the real truth about this. You know very well that this is not liberty, this is not independence. I will tell you what are my ideas about independence. One is that men should have free power to meet together and discuss political matters; but you cannot have that if there is a single man in the Assembly who is compelled to go against his will; and I am very well assured that a great number of those collected together are not there with their own free will and consent, and that if you gave them leave a great number would go to their homes at once. Now, a great reason for saying this is that you have got about 2,000 men together, so far as I can make out, and you call them the people of the Transvaal. You know very well that you are not agreed on this matter, and if I were to take the men away one by one from their fellows, I should get many of them to say they would not wish the annexation undone. Now, you say "you are not leaders, but the people themselves"; but remember that when the law begins to assert itself it will not inquire about voorloopers and waggon-drivers —it will ask who are the substantial farmers who brought these men together. And then, if I have to tell the truth, I shall have to say that there were many good men who were misled by foreigners and others, and that they have been made to do what is illegal by bad advice.

'Now I know who is one of those advisers, and I will tell you what I know of him. He was a rebel in England, and he betrayed his fellows. He came out to South Africa, and here he was tried for murder, and this is one of the men who is at this moment advising part of the press and a great number of the people in

this country.[1] Now, if you prefer being advised by such people to listening to what I have to say, I can say nothing further. I can only tell you what is my idea and what is in my power. You consider that the annexation of two years ago should be undone. Now, I have no authority to go back beyond the time that this country became a portion of Her Majesty's dominions. You know very well that it was not Sir Theophilus Shepstone who put an end to the Republic. You know very well that it was men amongst yourselves, not good burghers such as I see before me now, but men from foreign parts, who put an end to the Republic. You know very well that what I say is true. There are men before me who have borne high office in this country, and they know its difficulties. You called in a man, Mr. Burgers, and made him as far as possible supreme, and he brought in a number of people who were not Afrikanders, not farmers, to assist him in the Government. I should like to know if that is the sort of thing you want back again. What I understand by freedom and independence is, first of all, freedom of speech. Now, I doubt if you had that before, or if you have it now in your camp. I know that in the Cape Colony and in England every man may speak what he likes, and he may do what he likes, as long as he keeps within the law. Is it freedom that a man may not speak what is in his heart? Then there must be with freedom protection for life and property, and is there that when people threaten to shoot others and make biltong of them for not attending a political meeting?[2] And then is it essential that men should have the franchise—that all those who pay taxes should have a voice in making their own laws?[3] Now, all these things which make up what I call independence I can give you. I can promise you that these shall be the objects of any constitution that is made for the Transvaal; that you shall be able to go where you please, say what you please, and do what you please—all within the law; that you shall be protected in your lives and property while you obey the law, and that you shall have the power to make your own laws with reference to everything within the province. That is

[1] This was Mr. or 'Dr. Aylward, Commandant, agitator and author' as he has been since styled by the journal he edited.

[2] A common form of threat even to the present day.

[3] Curiously prophetic in view of the subsequent treatment of the Uitlanders.

what I am able to promise you, and I ask you to inquire of others who know me better than you do whether I ever promise what I did not intend to perform. I know it is not difficult to carry out this self-government, as I have seen in the Cape Colony how possible and easy it is. There your brethren, your friends, and relatives have achieved all these objects during the last twenty years with the perfect consent and goodwill of the British Government. You have doubtless heard in the old times before the voortrekkers started what an oppressive government there was at the Cape. There was protection to life and property, but there was no freedom of speech of the press or of the franchise. They had the old despotic system they got from the Dutch, but gradually men like our friend Mr. Kruger, with a good head and a good tongue, and Mr. Pretorius, proved to Her Majesty's Government that they were fit for self-government, and they have received it most fully. There was, as you know, a good deal of agitation, but in place of there being any reluctance on the part of Her Majesty's Government to give them self-government, the whole power of the English Government was required to get the colony at large to accept it. You know that it was only carried by a single vote at last. Well, what has been the result? That at this present moment they govern themselves even more entirely than Englishmen govern themselves in England.

'I am the only representative of the Queen out here, and Mr. Kruger will remember that when on his way to England I requested him to go into the House of Assembly in Cape Town and hear how they were discussing the conduct of the Governor, and whether they should recommend Her Majesty's Government to recall him. After a fortnight's discussion, having fully satisfied themselves, they gave me their full confidence and approved of what I had done. Well, who were these men? They were said not to be fit for self-government, but I feel confident in saying that they are perfectly fit to govern themselves, and they are your own relations. All I ask for is that you should do what has been done in the Cape. The same coat never fits two men alike, and the same constitution never exactly fits two countries, and what I should wish is that you would only speak out and say how much you would want of the same self-government. You must remember that it is under the Queen's Govern-

ment that you are able to assemble in that camp. If some were in power who wish to be, do you think you could come and talk about what you please out there?[1] If you mean by independence the old Republic back again, then I have no power whatever to give you anything of the kind. Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, and Jorissen have been themselves to England, and they have themselves heard from the Queen's own Ministers the determination of the English people in this matter. Some people have got it into their heads that we are in difficulties in Zululand, and would be very glad to throw up the Transvaal. And now I should like them to tell you whether they themselves would think it honourable for us to give up those who have thrown in their lot with us. There have been some Field-Cornets who have been running with the hare and hunting with the hounds, but there are others who have done their duty honestly and bravely; and do you really think that men of the same blood as yourselves would give up men who have been threatened to be made biltong of, and that their wives and children should be hunted out of the country? I believe my own countrymen would rather die first. I believe I spoke to you before about treating with native tribes to incite them to rise. I have got the names of some of those who are accused of this, and I am glad the name is not that of any man I have yet seen, and I need not tell you that I firmly believe those before me would kick out any man from their midst who did so behave. I do not believe they would countenance him for one minute, but I tell you this in order to warn you of the dangers you incur of being mixed up with men whom you do not trust yourselves. I believe that some of the newspapers state that a change has come over the people of England, and that they would be very glad to give the Transvaal up. I advise you as your friend not to believe one word of it. The reason given for taking over the Transvaal was that it was badly governed, and paved the way for foreigners to come in and set up a foreign government in this country. These reasons have been given, and do you suppose for one moment that the people of England would be so cowardly as to take the country and not make an attempt to govern it well, to throw over all the men who have stuck by us, and to

[1] Compare the breaking up of the Uitlanders' meeting at Johannesburg twenty years later.

give up the country to be torn to pieces as factions please? Never believe that the people of England will do anything of the kind. They will strive honestly to give this country the best government they can—as good a government as they have themselves—and they will ask you to do nothing that they do not do themselves. There are a great many other fables I have heard put about by interested people as to what the Government will do—that they will commandeer the young men, commandeer waggons, that your lands will be taken away, etc. There is not a word of truth in this. I told Mr. Joubert when in Maritzburg that there was a great opportunity for the Transvaal. Its people could have helped their brethren bordering on Zululand when in distress. That was said in the interests of the Transvaal, not of Great Britain. You may be sure such a request will not now be repeated. I will not ask you again for assistance against the Zulus. By the blessing of God, the reinforcements now come will enable us to crush the resistance of the Zulu people. I hope to see the military system of the Zulus put down, and you may be sure if the troops we have are not able to do it more will come; and so far as I can help it there will be no dishonourable peace. This matter is in the hands of the Almighty, but I hope to show that there will be no difference in what I say now and will then say. What I want to give you now is a government as in the Cape Colony and in England with no Sovereign but the law and the Crown as the representative of the law.'

The spirit in which this candid and courageous speech was received may be best illustrated by the remarks of Joubert:

I should mislead your Excellency if I said that people of the Transvaal would be content with anything short of their independence. All the independence as defined in Cape Colony and England is understood by the people who have chosen their Sovereign or voluntarily stand under that sovereignty, and unlike us who have never consented to such sovereignty. A slave, however kindly treated, desires his liberty, and will exchange for such slavery freedom, even though it might entail great misery. We bought this land with our property and blood, and when we got the country we could never believe that Her Majesty's Government would repudiate our right, but acknowledged that the circumstances under which this country was annexed were a stain brought upon Her Majesty's name. And would she wipe it with our blood? And we are willing to be ground and crushed than to suffer oppression and injustice. We will rather perish by the sword of the Zulu or Macati, or any other barbarian in the

world, than suffer injustice in our own country, just as any Englishman would.

In forwarding an account of the meeting to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Bartle Frere said:[1]

We have learnt much in communication with the people as we passed through the country, not a day having passed when we did not meet many farmers, who, when free from the restraints of the crowd, would speak out very frankly and fully their opinions regarding the administration of the British Government and their own wants and wishes.

A very large proportion—I should say a very decided majority—when thus speaking alone their own individual sentiments, by no means desired that the annexation should be undone, and a very large number, including some of the most substantial and industrious, declared their intention of selling their farms and quitting the country if the British Government withdrew.

But, with the exception of a very few, who are already committed to extreme opinions, all whom we met considered that the first requisite for future quiet and good government is an unmistakable declaration by the British Government as to its fixed intention whether it will or will not withdraw from the Transvaal.

It will doubtless surprise Her Majesty's Government that, after all that has passed, and after my late very emphatic statements on the subject, there should be any real doubt on this point in the minds of the people of the Transvaal; but it must be borne in mind that they have a long experience of promises and expectations held out by the ruling Powers, comparatively few of which have been fulfilled. All the older men remember the throwing off of the Orange Free State and Transvaal by the British Government, in the former case, at least, contrary to the wishes of a great majority of the people. The hopes of firm, vigorous, and progressive government which were entertained at the time of the annexation have been but imperfectly fulfilled. The mode in which mass meetings and protests have been dealt with has enabled agitators to persuade large multitudes that the objects of their agitation are not hopeless of attainment, and especially since the meeting at Wonderfontein early in January the leaders have assumed a more defiant and peremptory tone, and have ventured more openly to threaten all those who did not join them. . . .

Nor should I omit to point out the proof afforded by the present position of affairs here that the annexation was almost the only step which could have saved the country from anarchy or foreign domination. It is obviously almost impossible in the present state of the population of the Transvaal that so vast a territory should have been governed as a single State by any such simple machinery as the Boers could provide from their own ranks; *unless the law were better respected and enforced than could have been the case under such a constitution as the Republic, it seems to me almost a necessity that all power should have fallen into the hands of a few enterprising and educated foreigners. They could hardly have been Englishmen. They might, and possibly would, have been extremely hostile to England, and would probably have made anything like peace in South Africa an impossibility for generations to come. I am told that when the Republic collapsed there was not a single man in high office who was a native or genuine Boer of the Transaaal.*[2]

[1] May 6, 1879.

[2] The italics of this prophecy are mine.

Sir Bartle, like all men of extreme honesty and rigorous truthfulness, could rarely be brought to believe in treachery and shiftiness in others. His confidence in human nature as a whole induced him to trust more steadily to representative assemblies and to delegates than seems altogether warranted by experience. It is, indeed, no easy matter for Englishmen, brought up to regard truthfulness as the first of the cardinal virtues, to understand the absolute disesteem in which it is held by Dutch Afrikanders even of the highest standing. I remember very well Lord Milner telling me that, though he had reached the mature age of forty-seven, and had had three years of South Africa, he was still unable to believe that a person of repute would look him in the face and tell him, with evident sincerity and much circumstance, a deliberate falsehood about a matter of fact. It is easy to make allowances for distortion in opinions, inferences, and all those matters in which self-deception is possible, but it is very difficult indeed to grasp the fact that most Dutch Afrikanders will lie to you on subjects as to which it is demonstrable that they are perfectly acquainted with the truth. In a three months' experience of the proceedings of the Cape Parliament, I have known again and again men to stand up in the presence of their colleagues and assert, not only that which they knew to be untrue, and they were well aware their audience knew to be untrue, but, what is more amazing, and can only be set forth in a bewildering sentence, that which they knew that all who heard them knew that they who said it knew to be untrue. This trait in a national character appears so incredible to the absolute Englishman that it is hard to persuade him of its existence. Yet it is there, and to deal with a Boer as though it were not there is to make him despise you, at the same time that, on reflection, it gives you ample reason to despise yourself. A very bad instance is supplied by the account of this interview with the High Commissioner in the proclamation of the Boer Triumvirate on December 13, 1880. Here is the Boer version :[1]

When, after the commencement of the unjustifiable Zulu War, which war might easily have been averted, the High Commissioner, Sir Bartle

[1] 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 124.

Frere, visited our country, this high official tried to persuade the people to desist from its resistance, but in vain. A camp of more than 4,000 burghers sent its representatives, and His Excellency was necessitated to acknowledge openly that the objections of the burghers to the annexation was more general than was represented to him by the officials, and that the leaders of the movement were the best and most principal people of the country.

Sir Bartle Frere took from the hands of the people a memorial to Her Majesty the Queen, wherein it was stated unreservedly that the people would not be subject to Her Majesty, and he accompanied this memorial by a despatch wherein he declared that the representations of the people were worthy of the most serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government. He read this despatch for approbation to the Commission of the people, and the thousands of burghers, this time believing that their good right had at last found a defender, went peacefully back to their occupation. Meantime, said high official, in a private letter to Her Majesty's Secretary for the Colonies, wrote that he regretted not to have sufficient artillery to chase this camp home. This letter had been written on the same day that he had the interview with the people.

The Government of Her Majesty, misled by her High Commissioner, has never given an answer to this memorial of the people. And when Sir Garnet Wolseley reached our boundary, he expressed as the general feeling of England's Government that knew not of the state of affairs, that 'as long as the sun shines the Transvaal will remain British territory.'

This document is the more astounding to an Englishman (to a Boer it is but 'slim'), inasmuch as Joubert, who is one of the three persons responsible for it, distinctly refused to sign the memorials referred to, because Frere had said, 'I have told you and Mr. Joubert that to give back the Republic as it was before would not be for your good, and how could I say, in sending the memorial to Her Majesty, that I think it would be for your good?' To which Joubert replied: 'In order to prevent misunderstanding, I would say very distinctly that I have endeavoured to bring these matters to this definite conclusion, and therefore proposed the memorial; and now that this support is refused, I shall have nothing to do with the memorial.'

On this subject it will be well to give the opinion of Mr. Norris-Newman, whose sympathy with the Boers during the struggle of 1880-81, of which he was an eye-witness, is undisguised:[1]

Sir Bartle Frere went alone into their large camp—notwithstanding the danger which was represented as being very great by the officials in Pretoria—with only a few members of his staff, and had a long personal interview with the leaders of the people, at which it was decided to send no more deputations, but to get up another memorial, and leave its trans-

[1] 'With the Boers in the Transvaal,' p. 92.

mission to England, accompanied with any recommendations thereon, entirely in Sir Bartle Frere's hands. The adoption of this moderate and sensible course was due solely to the sympathetic and straightforward manner of Sir Bartle himself, who, while distinctly stating that he could not give them any hope of the past being recalled or what was done being undone, yet expressed his feeling that the Boers had many grievances which might and ought to be redressed; and that he considered all the expectations and promises held out to them in the time of annexation had not been fulfilled. Foremost among these engagements was the gift of really representative institutions, which he then, and has since, advocated repeatedly and consistently up to the present time.[1] Sir Bartle Frere sent the memorial home, together with his views thereon, and a sketch of the Constitution which, in his opinion, should be granted and would be accepted by the Boers. His official connection with the Transvaal ceased entirely in June, shortly after his return to the Cape. It is only fair to him to show that, having had no voice in the matter of the annexation or any of the measures connected therewith, he could but deal simply with the state of affairs as he found them at the time of his visit, and could only act on the instructions from home, together with the oft-repeated official statements of the Government, that under no circumstances whatever could the act of annexation be revoked. I think it will be admitted by all, including the Boers themselves, that he took a fair and liberal view of the question; and had his views, together with Sir Theophilus Shepstone's promises, been carried out in a spirit of conciliation by a competent official, there can be little doubt that the Transvaal would still have remained a British colony, a valuable addition to the Empire, and a united and prosperous country, and that the recent disastrous war would never have occurred.

The measures which Frere proposed to meet the admitted grievances of the Boers are set forth by him in an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, February, 1881:

Before leaving Pretoria, we had arranged the measures which we agreed to recommend to Her Majesty's Government for the future government of the Transvaal. These embraced (1) the creation of an Executive Council in which some of the Boers should have a part as salaried members; (2) the creation of a temporary legislature capable of passing laws immediately necessary to strengthen the administration and to prepare the way for a representative Volksraad or House of Assembly; (3) more efficient organization and better payment of the High Court of Justice; (4) some improvement in the position of the worst-paid officials; (5) a careful scientific examination of the line of the Delagoa Bay Railway; (6) administrative reforms which were much needed, and included the provision of an efficient police force; (7) the finances were to be made the special charge of a Financial Commission, with a view to equalize revenue and expenditure; (8) as regarded representative institutions for the Transvaal, a great mass of materials had been collected, including opinions from the Ministry at the Cape, from the Chief Justice of the Cape, and more especially from Mr. Brand, the popular President of the Orange Free State, who most generously gave all the aid that his experience enabled him to afford regarding the changes which he thought might suit the wants of the Transvaal. These matters were forwarded to Her Majesty's Government, and it was my intention, as soon as the views of

[1] 1882.

the Home Government had been expressed, to have convened a Conference at which the Transvaal remonstrant party would have been adequately represented, with a view to draw up such a Constitution as might satisfy the reasonable desires of the Transvaal people for representative institutions. Mr. Pretorius had intimated his willingness to consider with his colleagues on the Commission my proposal that he should assist as a member of the Executive. Hopes were entertained that Mr. Kruger might be willing to take a similar part in the measures which must precede the enactment of a representative Constitution

It is more than possible that, had Frere been allowed to carry out his Transvaal policy on the lines which he himself suggested, there would have been no rebellion, or that, had the irreconcilables risen, there would have been no such assistance from the Orange Free State as was ultimately forthcoming. But he never had a chance. Within a week of his return to Cape Town,[1] he was informed that Sir Garnet Wolseley was on his way out to supersede Lord Chelmsford in the command of the army, and Sir Henry Bulwer, as Governor of Natal, and ('for the time') Sir Bartle Frere himself in the High Commissionership of the Transvaal, Natal, and all the adjoining eastern portion of South Africa. Is it possible to condemn too severely this policy of compromise, which has been responsible for nine-tenths of the trouble in South Africa? Twenty years before Sir George Grey had been recalled because he had advocated a confederation clamoured for by the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. He was sent back on a change of the Ministry at home, but his reappointment was made conditional upon his abandonment of the policy which alone promised peace and prosperity to that distraught and divided land. The ostensible ground on which Frere was deprived of his authority over the Transvaal was the supposed need of his presence in Cape Town to hasten on the policy of confederation. It was as if Pharaoh had deprived the Israelites of clay as well as straw. The real opposition to Federation on the lines approved in London lay in Cape Colony; but the Transvaal was the base from which the Dutch Afrikanders thought it might be best attacked, and Frere, so to speak, was deliberately cut off from his base.

One of the motives which probably induced Sir Garnet Wolseley to accept the office was his natural ambition as a

[1] June 7, 1879.

soldier to finish off the war in Zululand. He arrived in Cape Town on June 28, but before he could assume command in Zululand the Battle of Ulundi had been fought and won by Lord Chelmsford,[1] and, as he wrote to Frere,[2] 'The sooner I can complete my work, the sooner I can "clear out," so as to leave the coast clear for your arduous task of confederation.' It is not in the least discreditable to him that he should have been ignorant of the elements of the problem he had to solve, or that he majored up and down the Transvaal, telling the Boers that the sun would cease to shine before the annexation was reversed. So little did he know about conditions that he actually entered into correspondence with Aylward, the Fenian, ex-convict, and alleged murderer, who presented him with a memorandum on the situation. His answer deserves to be reproduced. It is dated Utrecht, the Transvaal, September 10, 1879, and was written by his private secretary, Captain St. Leger A. Herbert:

SIR,

I am directed by General Sir Garnet Wolseley to acknowledge and to thank you for your interesting memorandum of the 26th ult. on the subject of the affairs of the Transvaal territory. His Excellency desires me to inform you, in reply, that he is glad to be able to take a less gloomy view of the position of matters in the Transvaal than has been accepted by you. His Excellency's knowledge of the Dutch causes him to think very highly of their solid good sense, which, he feels sure, will prevent them from being led into rebellious acts by the violence of a small party of self-seeking intriguers.

It is not necessary to discuss Sir Garnet's policy at length. It is sufficient to say that a civilian's work was entrusted to a distinguished soldier, and that he dealt with it in the fashion which might be expected from his past. It will be well, perhaps, to recall one passage of a once famous speech of his (Wakkerstrom, October, 1879):

Her Majesty's Government did not annex the Transvaal to extend her dominions. No; for have we not, after conquering Zululand, given it up? It was only done for your good. The Zulu War is now over, and Cetewayo is by this time in Cape Town, and will never return to Zululand. I am now slowly travelling to Pretoria, and as soon as I arrive there, with the assistance of His Excellency the Administator, I will form an executive body, and then, with the assistance of the sensible and the loyal, will frame a Constitution for this territory, which I will transmit for the approval

[1] July 5. [2] July 29.

of the Home Government, under which Constitution everyone will have as great a liberty as can be desired. I must remind you now, that where the British flag waves, there freedom of speech is allowed, but not licentiousness. I therefore now call on you to say what you have to; and if you have any grievances, speak out like men. I close with the same remark that I commenced with, and which I wish you to spread far and wide—that so long as the sun shines the Transvaal will remain British territory.

The licentiousness of opinion, which, Sir Garnet declared, would not be permitted, seems to have continued unchecked in the press. The *Volkstem* wrote:

It is clear our future Government of Sir Garnet's creation will be moulded in an absolutely autocratic groove. Shall we tell him—the great 'I' who presumptuously disposes of the future—that as sure as he has declared the protest of the old Government to be a dead letter, so certainly will the inevitable consequences of his act force him to declare also the annexation proclamation with all the promises to be a dead letter. He cannot appoint a *legal* Executive, as such an appointment rests, according to the provisions of the law, with the Volksraad, and not with the State. He will either have to do this (what?) or support his illegally constituted Executive with the bayonet; and we warn our readers, Boers as well as others, to be on their guard lest the last spark of liberty be taken from them, and we be bound hand and foot, delivered over to military despotism.

Sir Garnet then issued proclamations and commenced abortive prosecutions. It was, however, to none of his or the Colonial Secretary's mistakes that the catastrophe was due. Such blunders, bad as they were, were at least remediable. The be-all and end-all of the Transvaal tragedy is to be found in the Gladstone campaign at the end of 1879. Then, for the first time in our political history, the conflicts of party were put aside, and great Imperial issues were decided by the old-fashioned ordeal of single combat. It was a curious and a disastrous duel. The famous Midlothian campaigns were undertaken with the object, avowed two years earlier at a meeting at Oxford, of thwarting and counteracting the policy of Lord Beaconsfield. The singularity of this return to classical and medieval fashions of settling disputes was intensified by the fact that one of the combatants was debarred by his position from defending himself. The standing order of the House of Commons, which forbids, so far as a standing order may, the intervention of peers in Parliamentary elections, was adopted at a time when it was never contemplated that politics in England would be reduced to a duel between a peer and a

commoner. With the exception of one memorable speech at Knightsbridge, after the close of the Berlin Conference, and one historic letter to the Duke of Marlborough on the eve of the dissolution, Lord Beaconsfield's part in the duel was that of a target. Truth to tell, though he alone of the Ministry contemplated the possibility of a defeat at the elections, he was somewhat over-contemptuous of the 'sophistical rhetorician inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity,' and the issues of the election of 1880 might well have been different if the Disraeli of the early seventies could have stepped into the arena to meet his opponent on equal terms. As it was, intelligent and patriotic Englishmen regarded the contest as they might have looked on at Don Quixote's tilt against the windmill. But the windmill is not always victorious. The conditions of the fight—if so one-sided an affair can thus be described—were as favourable to Mr. Gladstone's method of attack as in their consequences they were disastrous to the country. It is almost forgotten that up to the closing of the polls in the elections of 1880 Lord Granville and Lord Hartington were the recognised leaders of the Opposition. Mr. Gladstone had retired in dudgeon in 1874, as once before in 1867, and when he emerged from his tent a year or so after, and buckled on his armour to engage in one more tilt against his rival, it was asserted, by himself and on his behalf, that this was positively his last appearance in the ring. The occasion was a sort of performance for the benefit of certain Christian subjects of the Porte, whose wrongs had not deeply concerned him during his long spell of power (one way and another it had covered a period of nearly twenty years). It is, perhaps, easier for a warrior to quit the field once than to repeat the act of self-effacement. At any rate, uninvited, and, if the truth were known, undesired, Mr. Gladstone put himself at the head of the rabble still nominally under the command of two 'safe Whigs.' The strategic advantage of his plan of campaign is obvious. The wild and reckless spirits, the malcontents of every class, the disaffected Irish, and the militant Nonconformists, reckless of consequences, were in no humour to ask discomfortable questions, and, in fine, were ready to follow their leader.

Moreover, a large number of sober, middle-class men, reared in the traditions of a mild and cautious Liberalism, were desperately resentful of the commercial depression which had coincided with the latter years of Lord Beaconsfield's government, and their apprehension as to the tactics of Mr. Gladstone were quieted by the assurance that his rhetoric bore the same relation to the moderate statements of Lord Hartington as the irresponsible placards and handbills of excited party agents bear to the utterances of their candidate. The fireworks of the Midlothian Campaign were looked upon by most of the spectators with amused enjoyment, as merely incidental embellishments of a sober political demonstration. The fireworks, however, were the central, and, as it turned out, the sole, business of the campaign. They were to prove anything but a *feu de joie*, and in the sequel the sparks of them set more than a quarter of the Empire ablaze. Nowhere did the combustibles chucked about in Midlothian produce so fine a conflagration as in South Africa. Unwittingly, perhaps, but certainly and inevitably, our greatest statesman so fired the veld that even now the flames are by no means extinct—in fireman's language, are barely controlled. Worse, far worse—worse by many degrees than the gifted rhetorician who struck the matches could possibly have anticipated—was to ensue from this initial act of incendiarism, but what did immediately happen was bad enough.

On November 25, 1879, in the first Midlothian speech, Mr. Gladstone said:

> They (Lord Beaconsfield's Government) have annexed in Africa the Transvaal territory, inhabited by a free, European Christian Republican community, which they have thought proper to bring within the limits of a monarchy, although out of 8,000 persons in that Republic qualified to vote on the subject, we are told—and I have never seen the statement officially contradicted—that 6,500 protested against it. These are the circumstances under which we undertake to transform republicans into subjects of a monarchy.

The next day Mr. Gladstone put in a supplement:

> There is no strength to be added to your country by governing the Transvaal. The Transvaal is a country where we have chosen most unwisely—I am tempted to say insanely—to place ourselves in the strange predicament of the free subjects of a monarchy going to coerce the free subjects of a Republic, and to compel them to accept a citizenship which they decline and refuse. But if that is to be done, it must be done by force.

This was bad, but worse remained behind. On December 29, to wit:

We have undertaken to govern despotically two bodies of human beings who were never under despotic power before, and one of whom was in the enjoyment of freedom before. We have gone into the Transvaal territory, where, it appears—the statement has not been contradicted—that there were 8,000 persons in a condition of self-government under a Republican form. Lord Carnarvon announces, as Secretary of State, that he was desirous of annexing their territory, if they were willing; they replied by signing to the number of 6,500 out of 8,000 a protest against the assumption of authority over them.[1] We have what you call 'annexed' that territory. I need not tell you there are, and can be, no free institutions in such a country as that. The utmost, I suppose, that could be done was to name three or four or half a dozen persons to assist the Governor. But how are they chosen? I apprehend not out of the 6,500, but they are chosen out of the small minority who were not opposed to being annexed. Is it not wonderful to those who are free men, and whose fathers have been free men, and who hope that their children will be free men, and who consider that freedom is an essential condition of civil life, and that without it you can have nothing great and nothing noble in political society, that we are led by an Administration, and led, I admit, by Parliament, to find ourselves in this position that we are to march upon another body of free men, and against their will to subject them to despotic government?

Nor was this fervour abated even when victory seemed assured, when, to use his own phrase, he was quitting 'a position of greater freedom and less responsibility,' and when it might be assumed that he took some thought of the facts which would confront him in office. As late as March, 1880, when it was obvious that the swing of the pendulum must bring him back into power, Mr. Gladstone said, referring to Lord Beaconsfield's manifesto:

Lord Beaconsfield omitted Africa, and did not say the Radicals had created any difficulties for him there. But there he has contrived without, so far as I am able to judge, the smallest necessity or excuse, to spend five millions of your money in invading a people—the Zulus—who had done him no wrong, and now he was obliged to spend more of your money in establishing the supremacy of the Queen over a community Protestant in religion, Hollander in origin, vigorous, obstinate, and tenacious in character even as we are ourselves—namely, the Dutchmen of the Transvaal.

And at Peebles on March 30:

We have got a Government that increases our taxes, and yet does not pay our debts; we have got a Government that promises a great deal about legislation, and neglects it, and throws it overboard in order to

[1] See *supra*, p. 160.

pursue mischievous, disquieting, and disturbing schemes, while our interests are neglected and left in abeyance. What is the effect of these schemes? The effect, if we look at the state of things abroad, is this: that they increase our territory without increasing our strength, just as if, as I have said before, a landlord were to buy an estate adjacent to his own, on condition that he should pay all the rates and receive none of the rents. That is the meaning of adding places like Cyprus and places like the country of the Boers in South Africa to the British Empire. And, moreover, I would say this: that if these acquisitions were as valuable as they are valueless, I would repudiate them, because they are obtained by means dishonourable to the character of our country.[1]

These speeches of Mr. Gladstone and others of a similar character were reprinted in pamphlet form and circulated throughout the Transvaal, just as similar speeches were disseminated before the outbreak of the war in 1899. Of the effect produced upon the disaffected in the Transvaal by these encouragements to rebellion there can be no doubt. Before the results of the elections were known, the Committee, of which Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius were members, passed a resolution thanking Mr. Gladstone for his invaluable support—a fact of which Messrs. Joubert and Kruger, on hearing of Mr. Gladstone's triumph, reminded him in a letter (May 10, 1880):

The Committee had the honour to address you a few weeks ago, and to bring you the heartfelt thanks of the people of the Transvaal. And they add: There was, and still is, amongst the people a firm belief that truth prevails. They were confident that one day or another, by the mercy of the Lord, the reins of the Imperial Government would be entrusted again to men who would look out for the honour and glory of England, not by acts of injustice and crushing force, but by the way of justice and good faith. *And indeed their belief has proven to be a good belief.*[2]

[1] It may be interesting to compare this version of the speech as it appeared in the *Times* and all the leading English papers with the version quoted by Mr. Carter from a Transvaal print. 'If,' Mr. Gladstone is made to say, 'the Transvaal were as valuable as it is valueless, he would restore it because the acquisition had brought discredit on the English name. There were many who saw that the country, now standing in a position of security, could be very well managed by the Boers. They would know how to steer clear of past errors, and the restoration sanctioned by England would have given a strength, a peace and security, a permanency heretofore unknown, and as far as I am able to see still out of reach. A gentleman who would have given universal satisfaction was unanimously agreed upon as the future President, and all would have been well. Guarantees for security to persons and property would have been exacted, and the Boers, seeing that England really meant honestly and honourably, would have progressed almost, not quite, as rapidly as we are now doing. Land would not have depreciated in value, because a large immigration of old colony farmers would have immediately come into the territory of such unlimited extent and resources.'

[2] Italics are mine.

Mr. Gladstone's reply may be as well given here, though it anticipates events:

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL.
June 8, 1880.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received your letter of 10th of May, and I observed that it must have been written before the announcement of the policy of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Transvaal, made on the 20th of that month in the Speech from the throne, could have reached you. I will not, however, on that account content myself with a simple acknowledgment. It is undoubtedly matter for much regret that it should, since the annexation, have appeared that so large a number of the population of Dutch origin in the Transvaal are opposed to the annexation of that territory, but it is impossible now to consider that question as if it were presented for the first time. We have to deal with a state of things which has existed for a considerable period, during which obligations have been contracted, especially, though not exclusively, towards the native population, which cannot be set aside.

Looking to all the circumstances, both of the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa, and to the necessity of preventing a renewal of disorders which might lead to disastrous consequences, not only to the Transvaal, but to the whole of South Africa, our judgment is that the Queen cannot be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal; but, consistently with the maintenance of that sovereignty, we desire that the white inhabitants of the Transvaal should, without prejudice to the rest of the population, enjoy the fullest liberty to manage their local affairs. We believe that this liberty may be most easily and promptly conceded to the Transvaal as a member of a South African Confederation.

In view of my citations from the Midlothian speeches, it is not extravagant to say that a more cynical document than this does not exist in history. However, for the moment we are concerned with the effects of Midlothian on the Transvaal. These may be gathered from the speech which Sir Garnet Wolseley found it necessary to make at a banquet given in his honour at Pretoria:

I am told that the Boers are told to keep on agitating in this way, for a change of Government in England may give them again the old order of things. Nothing can show greater ignorance of English politics than such an idea; I tell you there is no Government, Whig or Tory, Liberal, Conservative, or Radical, would dare, under any circumstances, to give back this country. They would not dare, because the English people would not allow them. Give back the country—what would it mean? To give it back to external danger, to the danger of attack by hostile tribes on its frontier, who, if the English Government were removed for one day, would make themselves felt the next. Not an official of Government paid for months; it would mean national bankruptcy. No taxes being paid, the same thing occurring again which had existed before, would mean danger without, anarchy and civil war within—every possible misery; strangulation of trade, and the destruction of property.

Alas, for Sir Garnet! He had yet to know the innermost of his great leader. He was some years off the desertion of Gordon, and, having no political intuitions, he had not divined the possibility of Majubanimity.

The position of those in authority in South Africa was strengthened by what was probably the last important despatch sent by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as Colonial Secretary. He telegraphed to Sir Garnet Wolseley: 'You may fully confirm explicit statements made from time to time as to inability of Her Majesty's Government to entertain any proposal for withdrawal of the Queen's sovereignty.'

Again, in a despatch from Sir Garnet (October, 1879), which for some reason remained unpublished till 1881, there occur these remarkable words:

> Even were it not impossible for any other reasons to contemplate a withdrawal of our authority from the Transvaal, the position of insecurity in which we should leave this loyal and important section of the community —the English inhabitants—by exposing them to the certain retaliation of the Boers would constitute, in my opinion, an insuperable obstacle to retrocession. Subjected to the same danger, moreover, would be those of the Boers whose superior intelligence and courageous character have rendered them loyal to our Government.

The mistake was, as it has ever been, to assume that opinions uttered in England do not reach the Boer mind. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is certain that the controllers of Boer journals, however they come by their information, manage to reproduce very accurately, and often with strange identity of language, the very views of the London Radical. It is a remarkable fact that, whereas few people at home anticipated the overthrow of Lord Beaconsfield in 1880, that defeat had for some months been freely discounted in the *Volksstem* and its kind, while Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, as we have seen from their letter to Mr. Gladstone, relied most positively upon that very change of Government which shortly occurred.

It would be hard to say that up to this point there were no precedents for Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards South Africa. A statesman who undertakes to rouse the country against the external policy of the Government of his day assumes a grave responsibility. It is generally recognised that external policy lies outside the sphere of party contro-

versy. The ministers in charge of our foreign relations are, or should be, for obvious reasons, the representatives of the nation, and not of a particular section. Few Ministers owe their position to a specific mandate from the people upon the conduct of foreign affairs. It is one of the great advantages which the Americans owe to the wisdom of the framers of their Constitution that executive functions and legislative initiative are kept distinct. The fate of an American Administration is not determined by the result of debates on internal reform; the Executive remains, however roughly either or both Chambers may handle measures submitted for their consideration by the President and his advisers. In this country, on the other hand, an Executive which has administered the external relations of the country to the admiration of all may be driven from office by the rejection of a measure dealing with so relatively paltry a question as that of Higher Education in Ireland. Theoretically, of course, this system is absurd. In practice, however, the mischief is neutralized by the unwritten law which prescribes continuity in foreign policy and the exclusion of the highest executive functions from the arena of party strife. There are, no doubt, occasions when the Opposition is bound, by its convictions and traditions, to make a particular foreign policy the pretext for a great constitutional struggle. It is only necessary to cite the names of the elder Pitt, of Burke, and of Fox in connection with the War of Independence to show, not only that there are exceptions to the rule, but that there are exceptions thoroughly warranted by the circumstances of the hour. If Mr. Gladstone had been convinced that the annexation of the Transvaal was a manifest injustice, originating in a bastard Imperialism, and running counter to all the best traditions of English policy, he would have been justified not only in protesting, as he did, against the annexation, but also in lending, as he did, encouragement to the Boers of the Transvaal to resist incorporation in the Empire. It would have been, as I have said, an attitude involving a grave responsibility, but that responsibility, had his convictions been serious, would have been one which he was not only justified in taking, but was bound to take. But there is no precedent, and there is

no justification, for championing certain doctrines in Opposition to the extent of encouraging revolt, and repudiating these same doctrines in office, and attempting to put down, *vi et armis*, the dupes of one's own exuberant rhetoric.

Advisedly or not, Mr. Gladstone's apologists have persistently mistaken the nature of the indictment brought against his South African policy. They assume that it must stand or fall by the action taken after British arms had sustained more than one serious reverse. That is not the charge. The charge is that Mr. Gladstone's policy in South Africa was characterized by the most flagrant and cynical dishonesty, from the date of his Midlothian speeches on to the outbreak of the rebellion. Pro-Boers of to-day will have it that the Dutch Afrikander is justified in his suspicion of British statesmanship. I am far from denying that his attitude is either unwarranted or unnatural. I assert, however, that in the long line of statesmen who have directly or indirectly controlled South African politics from London, there is none whose policy has done so much to discredit British statesmanship as Mr. Gladstone. In this opinion I am not by any means alone. We are told, for instance, that Mr. Gladstone's name is held in veneration by the Boers. Well, the Boers are the best dissemblers in the world. It would have been unwise of them to express their innermost thoughts about Mr. Gladstone after extorting from him all, or nearly all, that they demanded. But there are proofs to hand that they took much the same view of him as was, and is, taken by the less devout among his countrymen.

> 'We have had enough of the promises,' quoth Joubert,[1] after Amajuba, 'of such people. They promise, but don't fulfil, and we cannot any longer put faith in their promises. They are not carried out. We are determined to know exactly what is to be done, and what is intended, before we make any final arrangements. We will on no account trust to the fine promises of English politicians, because our experience of the past makes us have no confidence in them. . . . We sent a deputation to the Queen of England to no

[1] 'With the Boers in the Transvaal,' p. 223.

purpose. I want to know why Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister of England, has not carried out his promise to return the Transvaal to its rightful owners, seeing he considered the annexation a disgraceful act. When we read his words, we relied upon the great English statesman doing us justice. He has not done so, and we desire to know why.'

Or take a certain statement made by Mr. Leonard Courtney in the Commons (August 31, 1881):

> 'I hold in my hand a memorial from six thousand Dutch Boers, addressed to the present Prime Minister, and begging him to complete the notable work he has accomplished in other directions by bringing about the restitution and freedom of the Transvaal.'

Mr. Courtney went on to inform the House that this memorial, which he had received from a member of the Cape Assembly whose name he did not give, was originally to have been presented to Mr. Gladstone himself; and that this course was not adopted was due to the Prime Minister's repudiation of his earlier utterances.

> 'The signing of the address came in consequence to a dead stop, and many of those who had already signed expressed themselves as so thoroughly and utterly disgusted that the gentleman who wrote to me did not feel himself at liberty to present the memorial to the right honourable gentleman.'

Mr. Courtney, at any rate, has been consistent from the first. He was the principal member of a committee which had opposed the annexation, and had kept up a continuous correspondence with the disaffected leaders in South Africa. A passage in Mr. Rider Haggard's 'The Last Boer War' throws a rather lurid light upon the relations between these politicians and their aiders and abettors in England:

I cannot conclude this chapter better than by drawing attention to a charming specimen of the correspondence between the Boer leaders and their friend Mr. Courtney. The letter in question, which is dated 26th of June (1880), purports to be written by Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, but it is obvious that it owes its origin to some member or members of the Dutch party at the Cape, from whence, indeed, it is written. This is rendered evident both by its general style and also by the use of such terms as *satrap*, and by references to Napoleon the Third and Cayenne,

about whom Messrs. Kruger and Joubert knew no more than they did of Peru and the Incas. After alluding to former letters, the writers blow a blast of triumph over the downfall of the Conservative Government, and then make a savage attack on the reputation of Sir Bartle Frere. 'The stubborn satrap' is throughout described as a liar, and every bad motive imputed to him. Really, the fact that Mr. Courtney should encourage such epistles as this is enough to give colour to the boast made by some of the leading Boers after the war: that they had been encouraged to rebel by a member of the British Government.[1]

If consistency be a virtue, Mr. Courtney has a double dose of it. This was twenty years ago, and he is still in correspondence with the enemies of his country, and encouraging, and, indeed, indulging, in just such slanderous invectives against Sir Bartle Frere's great successor. It has been urged in defence of Mr. Gladstone's official policy that it was merely an extreme instance of following the good precedent of maintaining continuity in the conduct of our external affairs. The apology is invalid. When in Opposition, Mr. Gladstone cited for special denunciation three instances of what he described as the spurious Imperialism of Lord Beaconsfield. These three were, the retention of Kandahar, the acquisition of the island of Cyprus, and the annexation of the Transvaal. If adherence to the precedent of continuity demanded the retention of any territory whose acquisition had been denounced in other circumstances, it was in India that the sacrifices of consistency were most urgently demanded. We hold our Indian Empire largely in virtue of what, for want of a better name, is called in politics 'prestige,' but is well known to the mercantile world by the name of 'credit.' In the East the subtleties of political casuistry are little known and less appreciated. There is no portion of the earth's surface on which motives are more indifferently regarded or actions more closely scrutinized than India. If we advance, those who accept our rule believe that we move because we have the will, the courage, and the strength. Our Indian fellow-subjects would smile if they were told that their rulers in widening their borders had no other object in view than that of improving the lot of the people they subjected, or of spreading the advantages of civilization and good government; and in the same way, given a retirement from a good position, they are

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

practical enough to attribute it solely to weakness and fear.[1] Probably no people in the world appreciate good, just, and upright government more than those who live under the sway of the Emperor of India. But it would be ridiculous to contend that any of them believe that the establishment of such administration is the main, or even a conspicuous, motive for our presence. Mr. Gladstone's advisers knew these phenomena of Indian thought like their own pocket. There, if anywhere in the Empire, the justification attempted by Mr. (now Sir Mountstuart) Grant-Duff for the retention of the Transvaal was peculiarly appropriate. 'Fieri non debuit,' he said, 'factum valet.' Yet, in spite of this knowledge of the effect upon public opinion in India of the withdrawal from Kandahar, in the teeth of the strongest military protest Mr. Gladstone determined to abandon Lord Beaconsfield's 'scientific frontier,' and to withdraw. He did both; but with this sacrifice to consistency he remained content. Having denounced the sinner in language of unparalleled vigour, he saw no reason why he should not accept two-thirds of the wages of sin. The restoration of Cyprus to Turkey would have cost us little. But Mr. Gladstone not only clung to that acquisition of Lord Beaconsfield's, but ignored the opportunity the cession gave him for improving the position of the Sultan's Christian subjects, whose cause he had so passionately championed when in Opposition. It was in South Africa that this disregard of pledges, given or implied, had the most baneful effects. It is more than likely that withdrawal in the early months of 1880 would have been followed by a recrudescence of that state of anarchy which justified annexation; and those who, on the strength of our acquisition, had settled in the country —those of the Dutch who had espoused our cause—would have had an unpleasant, and perhaps a ruinous, time. But our position would have been so strong that we could, with

[1] A curious illustration of the workings of the native mind is afforded at the time that these lines are writing. The Sikhs and Baluchi of our expeditionary force in China have expressed the greatest wonderment at the fact that a German Field-Marshal is in supreme command of the British Army. It is very doubtful that they understand the explanations given to them; but it is fortunate for our prestige in India that Count von Waldersee is a German and not a Russian.

the approval of all the Dutch inhabitants of South Africa, have compelled reparation for wrongs done on our subjects. Whatever consequences the reversal of the Carnarvon policy might have entailed, it could not have been misinterpreted. Our critics and our rivals might have ridiculed the Quixoticism of an eccentric people, but there would have been no danger of their attributing our action to fear. It is possible —and, I think, very likely—that the aspirations of the Afrikanders for a United South African Republic would have been encouraged. But it is certain that the same aspirations would have been no better stimulated than they were by the actual event. The Dutch Afrikander might have said, and he probably would have said, that England, not for the first time, had proved herself so indifferent to the value of South Africa that she would not seriously oppose the establishment there of an independent Republic; but, at any rate, he would scarce have cherished that sentiment of mingled hatred and contempt with which, since 1881, he has regarded England and all things English. It is possible also, though I do not think it probable, that after a few years' experience of the difference between British and Hollander administration, the Transvaal Boer would have petitioned for a restoration of the sovereignty which he had rejected. In any case, the position of the Imperial Government, in giving effect to pledges its most paramount members had voluntarily made, would have been a very strong one. There were hardly any terms which it might not have exacted from an independent Republic bound to it by the clearest obligations of gratitude and goodwill. In the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony the name of England would have stood high, and racial reconciliation would have gone as far as in the nature of things it might. After the rebellion broke out, when the Boers were raiding Natal, General Sir George Colley sent an ultimatum to General Joubert, who was then in camp at Laing's Nek. I give the reply (out of its place) because it shows that, even when their first hopes had been disappointed, the malcontents would have accepted terms under which confederation was possible. The letter[1] (January 29, 1881) was drafted by the triumvirate at Heidelberg, and for-

[1] 'With the Boers in the Transvaal,' p. 140.

warded to General Joubert for transmission to General Sir George Colley:

We beg to acknowledge receipt of yours of the 23rd. In reply we beg to state that, in terms of the latter, we are unable to comply with your request as long as your Excellency addresses us as insurgents, and insinuates that we, the leaders, are wickedly misleading a lot of ignorant men. It is nearly hopeless for us to attempt to find the proper words for reply; but before the Lord we would not be justified if we did not avail ourselves of this, perhaps the last, opportunity of speaking to you as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen and the people of England, for whom we feel deep respect. We must emphatically repeat, we are willing to comply with any wishes of the Imperial Government tending to the consolidation and confederation of South Africa; and in order to make this offer from our side as clear and unequivocal as possible—although we have explained this point fully in all our documents, and especially in paragraphs 36 to 38 of our first proclamation[1]—we declare we would be satisfied with a rescinding of the annexation and restoration of the South African Republic under a protectorate of Her Majesty the Queen, so that once a year the British flag shall be hoisted, all in strict accordance with the above-mentioned clauses of our first proclamation. If your Excellency resolves to reject this, we have only to submit to our fate, but the Lord will provide.

This policy, whatever might be said by way of criticism on it, came not within measurable distance of dishonour; and the political cynic would be in order if he said that that is why it was passed by and another tested in its stead.

As for that other, by our attempt at armed authority in the Transvaal we alienated whatever sympathy a policy of concession might have earned us. By our retrocession in defeat we lost all, and more than all, that we should have lost in granting the Boer request at first. Without hint or hope of reward we branded ourselves inferior from one end of South Africa to the other. That we got no gratitude—as, truth to tell, we deserved none—was made apparent, not only in the Transvaal, but also in the Cape Colony. Above all, we deliberately forfeited our fame for straight dealing. In our previous troubles in South Africa, in all our blunders and in all our follies, our repute for honour and probity had gone unstained; now all that was ended, and the Boer could no more trust our word than he could trust his brother's. Stated nakedly, the case was this: For the

[1] The paragraphs in question are as follows: 36. The differences over boundaries of natives shall be submitted to arbitration. 37. For the native policy the Government is prepared to accept general principles to be decided upon after deliberation with the colonies and States of South Africa. 38. The Republic is prepared to confederate with the colonies and States of South Africa.

purpose of discrediting and defeating a lifelong adversary, Mr. Gladstone denounced not merely the expediency, but also the honesty, of our acquisition of the Transvaal. He encouraged the Boers to resist our authority, if not actually to rebel against it. Translated into Dutch, his words were circulated through South Africa endthwart and overlong. The Boers believed, as they had a right to believe, that a great party in England was pledged to champion their cause, and, if opportunity served, to restore their independence. Nothing occurred between the delivery of the Midlothian speeches and Mr. Gladstone's letter to Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, which I have already quoted, excepting only Mr. Gladstone's elevation to the Premiership. From December, 1879, to June, 1880, there is an interval of six months. Let me contrast some of the extracts I have given above. On December 29, 1879, Mr. Gladstone asked of a gaping audience:

> 'Is it not wonderful to those who are free men, and whose fathers have been free men, and who hope that their children will be free men, and who consider that freedom is an essential condition of civil life, and that without it you can have nothing great and nothing noble in political society, that we are led by an Administration, and led, I admit, by Parliament, to find ourselves in this position: that we are to march upon another body of free men, and against their will to subject them to despotic government?'

And on March 20, 1880, he had said, with reference to 'adding places like Cyprus and places like the country of the Boers in South Africa to the British Empire,' that

> 'If these acquisitions were as valuable as they are valueless, I would repudiate them, because they are obtained by means dishonourable to the character of our country.'

Yet on June 8 of the same year, being in a position to effect that repudiation to which he had aspired three months before, he wrote thus to those who had taken him at his word:

Looking to all the circumstances, both of the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa, and to the necessity of preventing a renewal of disorders which might lead to disastrous consequences, not only to the Transvaal but to the whole of South Africa, our judgment is that the Queen cannot

be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal; but consistently with the maintenance of that sovereignty we desire that the white inhabitants of the Transvaal should, without prejudice to the rest of the population, enjoy the fullest liberty to manage their local affairs. We believe that this liberty may be most easily and promptly conceded to the Transvaal as a member of the South African confederation.

And, that there might be wanting no outward form of solemnity to this act of recantation, he caused, as Prime Minister (May 20, 1880), the following passage to be inserted in the gracious Speech from the Throne:

I invite your careful notice to the important questions of policy connected with the future of South Africa. I have continued to commend to the favourable consideration of the authorities and of the peoples in the various settlements the project of confederation. In maintaining my supremacy over the Transvaal, with its diversified population, I desire both to make provision for the security of the indigenous races, and to extend to the European settlers institutions based on large and liberal principles of self-government.

That, I say, was the position; and if England ever entered further into the Valley of Humiliation, I should like, were Majuba and the retrocession not ahead, to know when it was.

Even in these early days you can distinguish the lines of cleavage in the Liberal party. Mr. Courtney, for instance, referred to the Transvaal Loyalists in language very similar to that employed by certain 'cannibals' during the war of 1899-1901 to describe all South Africans not of Dutch origin.

> 'Men,' he called them, 'from the diggings, land-jobbers, and others who are ever haunting the borderland of civilization, and (ready) to rush like unclean birds after their prey. These are the men who repose their trust and loyalty in British rule.'[1]

In the same debate another Liberal, Mr. Woodhouse, called attention to the fact that

> 'the Dutch party favoured confederation, because they looked upon it as likely to fulfil their dream of Africa for the Afrikanders, and to prepare the way for a large independent South African Republic.'[2]

It is not necessary for my purpose to narrate in detail the events which preceded the actual rebellion, still less

[1] Hansard, August 31, 1880. [2] *Ibid.*

those of the disastrous military campaign which closed in the surrender of Majuba.

The issue was precipitated by the action of a Boer called Piet Bezuidenhout, a grandson of the man responsible for Slachter's Nek. He was summoned for non-payment of taxes; judgment was given against him, and execution issued, and a waggon was attached by the Sheriff's officers for sale in liquidation. The sale was fixed for a certain day in November at Potchefstroom, and on that day about a hundred Boers, armed to the teeth, assembled under the leadership of P. A. Cronje (whose name will always be associated with the massacre of Potchefstroom and the surrender of Paardeberg), and the waggon was seized by force. This was the first overt act of defiance. At Heidelberg the Triumvirate issued the proclamation, sent to the Special Commissioner at Potchefstroom, Major Clark, with the following ingenuous explanation:

We take it that, considering the seriousness of this matter, you will not make this a *casus belli*. If so, we throw the responsibility of this step on your shoulders, and take the liberty of reminding you that, in a very same state of affairs three years ago, when Sir Theophilus Shepstone wanted the annexation proclamation to be printed, that then the Government of the Republic was generous enough to allow the Government printer to print the same. We are of opinion that the representative of Her Majesty the Queen will in generosity not be behind the President of a small Republic. At all events, we know that the civilized world and the people of England in this matter will be on our side.

On Dingaan's day the Triumvirate, which consisted of Messrs. P. Kruger, P. Joubert, and M. W. Pretorius, with E. Bok as Secretary, sent an ultimatum to Sir Owen Lanyon, the Administrator, which is couched in such curious language that it will be read with interest:[1]

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

In the name of the people of the South African Republic we address ourselves to you for the performance of an earnest but imperative duty. We have the honour to enclose copy of a proclamation decided upon by Government and Volksraad, and published for general notice. The will of the people is therefore clear, and requires no further explanation at our hands. We declare in the most earnest manner that we have no desire to shed blood, and that we will have no war on our part. With you, therefore, it rests to necessitate us to take recourse to arms in self-defence. If, which may God forbid, it should ever come so far, we shall do so with the most profound respect for Her Majesty the Queen of

[1] 'With the Boers in the Transvaal,' p. 112.

England and for her flag. If it should ever come so far we shall defend ourselves with the knowledge that we fight for the honour of Her Majesty, fighting as we do for the sanctity of treaties sworn to by her, but violated through her servants. But the time for complaining is past, and we desire only your Excellency's co-operation to arrive at a peaceful solution of the difficulty in question. From the last paragraph of our proclamation your Excellency will observe the unalterable and determined intention of the people to co-operate with the English Government in all concerning the progress of South Africa. The only condition to arrive hereat is also comprised in the same proclamation, clearly and explicitly explained and provided with good reasons. In 1877 our Government handed over the keys of the Government offices without causing bloodshed; we trust that your Excellency, as representative of the noble British nation, will in magnanimity not be second to us, and in equal manner enable our Government to resume its functions. We expect an answer within twice twenty-four hours.

(Signed by the Triumvirate and members of the Executive Council.)

Identical letters were addressed to the officers commanding British troops, in which it was set forth that[1]

> 'Until the arrival of His Excellency's answer we don't know whether we are in a state of war or not; that consequently we cannot allow any movement of troops from your side, and wish you to stop where you are. We, not being at war with Her Majesty the Queen nor with the people of England (who we are sure would be on our side if they were acquainted with the position), but only recovering the independence of our country—we do not wish to take up arms, and therefore inform you that any movement of troops from your side will be taken by us as a declaration of war, the responsibility whereof we put upon your shoulders, as we know what we will have to do in self-defence.'[2]

The logic of these productions seems a little faltering, but there can be no doubt of their meaning. What is particularly noticeable in the proclamations of the Triumvirate is the belief (for which Mr. Gladstone was entirely responsible) that the people of England, as distinguished from the officials, were on their side, or would be, if the facts were known. It is impossible to blame them for this belief. Naturally, the General Election in Great Britain, which had taken place in the earlier part of the year, only interested them in so far as its issue affected the position in South Africa, and they had read with sympathy the denunciation

[1] 'With the Boers in the Transvaal,' p. 112.
[2] The same line was followed in October, 1899.

by a most conspicuous politician of the theft of their independence. They had been assured by him that, if the Transvaal were as valuable as he believed it to be valueless, he would repudiate the annexation, because it had been dishonourably achieved. They saw, further, that, in response to his appeals and denunciations, the electors of Great Britain and Ireland had given him an immense majority, and had dismissed the Ministers responsible for annexation. From their point of view, they were perfectly justified in thinking that the people of England were on their side. They did not know—how should they?—that their affairs constituted but an insignificant episode in Mr. Gladstone's campaign against his rival. They did not anticipate—why should they?—that the statesman who had climbed into office by a ladder in which the Transvaal matter stood for a single modest rung would promptly kick the ladder away, with the airy explanation that he had availed himself of it when he was in a position of 'greater freedom and less responsibility.' If they failed to understand Mr. Gladstone, they exhibited an incapacity which was shared by very many inhabitants of these isles. Their mistake consisted in identifying the English people with its 'minion of the hour.' It is a fact—but the Boers were not to be blamed for their ignorance of it—that at that time there did not exist in England any considerable body of men prepared to repudiate the colonial policy of the late Administration. Recent memoirs—as, for instance, those of Mr. Childers and the speeches of Lord Kimberley and Mr. Grant Duff—show that there was no intention on the part of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues to consider themselves bound by pledges which he had given in Opposition, and to which, to tell the truth, he appeared to attach no importance himself. Lord Kimberley had stated in the House of Lords that he was, as he had said,

inclined to think it would have been better if we had not annexed the Transvaal; but assurances having been given to the native population that they would be under the British Crown, and the communication having been made to the Dutch settlers that there was no intention to abandon the annexation, it would not be desirable now to recede. There was still a stronger reason than that for not receding. It was impossible to say what calamities such a step as receding might not cause to the

native population. It would be lamentable if, after the expenditure of so much blood and treasure to restore peace in South Africa, there should be the occurrence of internecine struggles. The number of the natives in the Transvaal was 800,000, and that of the whites only 60,000. Difficulties between the Zulus and the frontier tribes would again rise, and, looking as they must at South Africa as a whole, the Government, after a careful consideration of the question, came to the conclusion that they must have it understood that we could not relinquish the Transvaal. Nothing could be more unfortunate than uncertainty in respect of such a matter. We must pursue a steady course, and he hoped that those who took an interest in this question would remember that in respect to no quarter were patience and forbearance more necessary than in respect of South Africa.

And Mr. (afterwards Sir Mountstuart) Grant Duff, Lord Kimberley's understudy in the House of Commons, thus expressed the policy of the Government:

On considering the matter, the Cabinet had come to the conclusion that to reverse the annexation would be unwise. The act of Sir Theophilus Shepstone had been upheld by three successive Secretaries of State and by two Cabinets, representing between them almost every shade of English opinion. In the Transvaal itself the anti-British party was getting weaker and the pro-British party stronger. If England were to retire from the Transvaal what would happen? Would the men of English race all leave the country? No, indeed. The first thing that would happen would be a civil war between the pro-British and the anti-British party, and although he had admitted that the anti-British party was more numerous, the pro-British party would be reinforced by many unquiet spirits from the regions around, and would be able to call to its assistance the overwhelming masses of the native population who did not love, and had little cause to love, the South African Republic. He was afraid that the very worst gift which could be bestowed on Mr. Kruger, Mr. Joubert, and the other allies of the honourable member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), would be the restoration of that very independence for which the honourable member asked. He did not think they would live long to rejoice in their victory. The breakdown of the proposed confederation conference had put an end for the time to the possibility of giving to the Transvaal responsible government under a confederation. All the more desirable was it that the legitimate wishes of the people of the Transvaal should be in every possible way furthered by Her Majesty's Government; more especially was it desirable that arrangements should be come to with Portugal which might enable us to connect the Transvaal by a railway with the port of Lorenço Marques and Delagoa Bay.

It is quite impossible to condemn the action of the Boer Triumvirate, unless we are to lay down as a universal proposition that revolt against the *de jure* or *de facto* Government is as the sin of witchcraft. At any rate, it does not lie in the mouth of an Englishman to affirm such a principle. We have beheaded one King, and expelled another from the

throne; we have retrospectively condoned, if we have not glorified, the rebellion of colonies in America against our own authority; we have sympathized with risings against oppression in all parts of the world (except in Johannesburg), and we have made heroes of every kind of rebel and raider, excepting those against and on our own divinity. The rough-and-ready principle which has guided all generations of Englishmen in their judgments upon rebellion has been that it demands for its justification the fulfilment of two antecedent conditions. By the first, the wrongs endured by the prospective rebels should, from their point of view, be intolerable; by the second, there should be such a reasonable prospect of success as to exempt the promoters of revolt from the charge of wanton blood-guiltiness. Judged by these rough tests, who can say that the armed opposition to our rule in the Transvaal was not justified? It is no answer to assert that the Boers did not believe in the beneficence, and had no care for the advantage, of our rule. The fact that they were so minded—so mistaken, if you will—is their justification on the first count; and, on the second, the condition of a reasonable expectation of success is fulfilled by the simple historical fact that they succeeded. It does not, however, follow that the *de jure* Government is wrong in an attempt to suppress a revolt which fulfils both conditions. One of the commonest fallacies of human life is the idea that human action is generally restricted to a choice between good and evil, whereas nine times in ten, in public life as in private, our choice lies between a good and a better, or between a bad and a less bad. No impartial historian can deny that the Southern States of America had an extremely powerful case when they decided on an attempt to break up the Union. There was nothing in the American Constitution, nor in the circumstances in which the States became united, that forbade a dissolution of the Union which had been voluntarily contracted. On the face of it, what could be more reasonable than that one of the parties, finding itself in irreconcilable antagonism on fundamental questions with the other, should say, 'Let us dissolve the partnership, and each go his own way'? Yet, on the other side, the practically unanimous verdict of history has been

that the Northern States were justified in putting all to the hazard to maintain that unity essential to the existence of the American Republic as a world power. In like manner we must concede to the authors of the Boer rebellion at least as complete a justification as we accord to Jefferson Davis and his colleagues. But this admission does not debar us from claiming the same right for the Imperial Government as we recognise to have been Abraham Lincoln's. What would have stained American history with blood-guiltiness would have been that the Northern States should press their resistance to the dissolution of the Union far enough to cause enormous losses of life and treasure, together with an immense accentuation of sectional bitterness, and should then, from weariness or pusillanimity, abandon the struggle without attaining the end for which they entered upon it, or conciliating those to whom they yielded. That was Mr. Gladstone's crime and the crime of Mr. Gladstone's Government.

Of the war which followed, as war, I shall say nothing, for its incidents, though many of them are tragic, are not germane to the matter with which I am dealing. The British soldiers fought with that sublime courage which is their birthright, and those who led them were their equals in valour, and displayed an almost equally sublime obstinacy in refusing to fight except according to the rules of the game as it had been played by them and their forefathers. The Boers, too, fought after their own fashion and tradition. It would be as idle to deny that there were many deplorable cases of disregard of the usages of civilized warfare as it would be to ignore the obvious explanation. The traditions which determine the conduct of the British Army in the field are derived from centuries of conflict with Europeans met on equal terms. The experience of English soldiers in their wars with uncivilized or semi-civilized races has left but little impression upon their ideas of what warfare should be. The statement, attributed to the Duke of Wellington, that the Battle of Waterloo was won in the playing-fields of Eton admits of very wide application. To all ranks in the service war is the most noble of all games, and must be played according (1) to recognised rules, and (2) to those

unwritten laws of 'good form' which are not the less potent because they are hard to define. To the military critic Kinglake's 'History of the Crimean War' may be of small account, but to the historian and the student of men it is of infinite interest as illustrating the spirit in which Englishmen fight. To the Boers, on the other hand, war was an episode in the hardships of a race of pioneers. From their earliest days the necessity of guarding their wives and families from the attacks of ruthless barbarians was their first concern of life. It was impossible that they should regard as a game that which was the grimmest incident in an existence of struggle. They fought to kill and to avoid being killed. Their experience of warfare had been gained under conditions as inimical as is conceivable to an appreciation of the chivalrous niceties of battle. Their foes had been adepts in the treacherous subtleties of savage warfare. They had had to meet guile with guile, stratagem with stratagem, treachery with treachery. The fox-hunting Englishman has a very different sense of fair-play to his quarry from that of the Boer, who stalks the lion because he is the possible destroyer of his children. In the same way, the only human foe with which the Boer was acquainted was regarded by him, and with reason, as a wild beast, differing only from other wild beasts in that he bore arms. To expect, therefore, from men who were soldiers, not from choice, but from necessity, a fastidious regard for the refinements of warfare, was to ask peaches from barbed wire. Many cases of what, to our thinking, was black treachery were, to that of the Boers, perfectly natural and legitimate. These considerations have to be borne in mind in judging the conduct of the Boers, not only in the war of 1881, but in the conflict which is now so wantonly prolonged. Nothing could better illustrate the spirit which should animate and has animated British troops than the general order issued by the ill-fated Sir George Colley after the first disaster which overtook our forces:

The stain[1] cast on our arms must be quickly effaced and rebellion be put down; but the Major-General trusts that officers and men will not allow the soldierly spirit which prompts gallant action to degenerate

[1] December 28, 1880.

into a feeling of revenge. The task now forced on us by the unprovoked action of the Boers is a painful one under any circumstances, and the General calls on all ranks to assist him in his endeavours to mitigate the suffering it must entail. We must be careful to avoid punishing the innocent for the guilty, and must remember that, though misled and deluded, the Boers are in the main a brave and high-spirited people, and actuated by feelings that are entitled to our respect. In the operations now about to be undertaken, the General confidently trusts that the good behaviour of the men will give him as much cause of pride and satisfaction as their conduct and gallantry before the enemy, and that the result of their efforts will be a speedy and successful termination to the war.

My concern, however, is with the political and civil aspect of the situation. At the close of 1880, and after the earlier mishaps which befell Her Majesty's forces, a deputation of fifteen members of the Cape Legislature, of whom Mr. Merriman acted as spokesman, approached the Administrator, Sir G. S. Strahan, with a request that he would forward the following resolution by telegraph to Lord Kimberley:[1]

This deputation, in common with the rest of South Africa, deplores the unhappy state of affairs now existing across the Vaal River, and ventures to urge upon Her Majesty's Government that, in order to effect a settlement of the differences which have arisen and to establish tranquillity, it is desirable that some person acquainted with the feelings and opinions of the inhabitants, and possessing the confidence of all parties in South Africa, should be appointed as Special Commissioner to the Transvaal territory to inquire into and report upon the exact position of affairs, the feelings and wishes of those interested, and what arrangements would be most advantageous to the country and most likely to reconcile the inhabitants to the Government of the Queen; and the deputation would further respectfully suggest that the Chief Justice of the Cape Colony, Sir J. H. de Villiers, possesses in an eminent degree the qualifications desired for such an office.

The offer was courteously, but firmly, declined by Lord Kimberley; but it is significant that even the party in the colony in closest sympathy with the Boers of the Transvaal did not then contemplate the possibility of the retrocession. Early in the ensuing year Mr. Kruger issued what he called the 'Boer Petition of Rights.' It was addressed to the President of the Orange Free State and the Volksraad, and is of even greater interest now than it was at the date of its issue, inasmuch as it comprehends those assumptions which lie at the bottom of the claim for Dutch supremacy, so vehemently denied by the pro-Boers.

[1] December 25, 1880.

Who are we? (it asks. And this is the answer:) Descendants of the Dutch colonists of the Cape of Good Hope, and purely Dutch people and descendants of the refugees who obtained leave of the Staats General to settle down in the Cape Colony.

Between 1685 and 1806 these colonists spread over the whole of South Africa, and made it a prosperous settlement. The old Dutch colonial policy, similar to that of the whole world, was, compared with the principles by which colonial policy is now governed, very narrow-minded, but not more so than that of England. However, the inborn spirit of liberty and self-government of the Dutch succeeded well in triumphing over the despotical policy of the East India Company, and the old colony was covered by a prospering population living by agriculture, the breeding of cattle and the cultivation of the vine, and governing itself. The French refugees brought with them their ardent creed and that spirit of self-sacrifice which had made them leave their country under Louis XIV. From these two tribes descended a people *one* in language, *one* in faith, *one* in peaceful respect for the laws, but with a spirit of liberty and independence as large and as broad as the flats which they had wrested from the desert of Nature and the barbarous native population. The European policy after the fall of Napoleon I. produced a change in their political fate. They woke on a certain morning and found themselves subjects of the King of England. The King of the Netherlands had ceded the colony of the Cape of Good Hope in exchange for Belgium. The population had not been consulted, but was transferred from one owner to another like a flock of sheep. *It is here that the root will be found of the later occurrences and of our present struggle.*[1] We will not unnecessarily blame the English Government at the Cape Colony; we will gladly believe that the different members of the Government did their utmost to treat the Dutch colonists as fairly as possible; but the belief of our ancestors that they were an oppressed nation under foreign supremacy could never be extinguished. Collisions occurred; the Boers had always to submit, and were treated as rebels. However, the longing for liberty was not to be extinguished. One of these executions is remembered by every Afrikander as the murder at Slachter's Nek, where seven of their best men were hanged by the English. This occurred in 1817.

It is not necessary to analyze this extraordinary travesty of history. I reproduce a portion of it as a proof that at the root of the rebellion in the Transvaal, and of the sympathy secured for it in the Cape Colony, lay the passionate desire to substitute Dutch for English rule in South Africa. What is only implied in the passage I have quoted is asserted without disguise in the concluding paragraph of the proclamation:

With confidence we lay our case before the whole world, be it that we conquer or that we die; liberty shall rise in Africa like the sun from the morning clouds, like liberty rose in the United States of North America. Then it will be from the Zambesi to Simons Bay, Africa for the Afrikanders.[2]

[1] These italics are mine.

[2] The petition is worth reading. It will be found *in extenso* in Carter's Narrative of the Boer War,' pp. 180-194.

If this be not enough, take the proclamation addressed to 'our companions and fellow-countrymen in the Orange Free State,' and signed by 646 Transvaalers, including F. G. A. Wolmarans, N. M. S. Prinsloo, J. H. M. Kock and others, who were shortly to become prominent in the South African Republic:

Worthy Brethren and Fellow-countrymen (it ran),[1]—We are all the same flesh and blood. We serve one and the same cause. We all strive for freedom and religion; you, too, are in the like eminent danger; our well-being is yours, and our freedom is your freedom. Therefore we come to you with the assurance that your assistance and relief will be received with a thankful heart. We do not ask for goods or money, but your person; your blood is our blood, which through the usurper is being innocently spilt for the recovery of our independence. Therefore, brethren and fellow-countrymen, we appeal to you. Come and help. Thus far the Lord has assisted us and blessed our arms, and Providence will further help us. Our enemy is preparing with a superior power of many thousand soldiers and cannon to destroy us, the rightful owners of the Transvaal. Our border is too extensive, considering that we have other enemies to resist. We therefore repeat,

COME AND HELP.

Again we thank you for the help and succour hitherto rendered to a poor and oppressed people so much despised, and whose sacred rights are being unmercifully trodden upon. Consider our case. God rules and is with us. It is His will to unite us as a people—to a united South Africa free from British authority. The future lightens for us. His will be done.

This appeal was sterilized by the sagacious policy of President Brand, the one real statesman Afrikanderdom has yet produced. At the outbreak of the struggle there appeared a communication in the *Express* (afterwards to become the chief organ of the Afrikander Bond), which is singular, not for the sentiments it contains, but for the fact that it was published at all.

> 'Apart from the inexpediency of any interference on our side,[2] I don't see that the Transvaal people have a shadow of a claim upon our sympathy in their present trouble. Quite fresh in my memory are the arrogant demands made by the Government of the South African Republic upon our Volksraad to surrender to them our whole State, and how, when this demand was refused by our Government, a Transvaal army invaded our

[1] Carter's 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 242. It was dated Potschefstroom, February 19, 1881.

[2] Quoted by Carter, *ut supra*, pp. 319, 320.

territory quite prepared and willing to carry rapine and bloodshed through the entire country. Fortunately, our Government showed a firm front, and, hastily assembling a commando, opposed the invaders before they had penetrated any distance into the State, and thus frustrated their iniquitous designs. The aggressors recrossed the Vaal, and confined themselves thereafter, as far as we were concerned, to fomenting broils amongst themselves.'

Even President Brand, however, could only secure from the Volksraad that it should express itself in moderate language. The resolution adopted by it at the end of February ran as follows:

The Volksraad points out with earnestness, and urgently gives warning of, the fatal consequences which, threatening the whole of South Africa, must ensue to the European population out of the war carried on at present by the British forces against the Transvaal burghers. The whole population is mutually bound so closely together by relationship their interests and feelings are so wholly similar, that the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, with a view to the existing circumstances of South Africa, deems it its duty to express the wish that Her Majesty and the British Government may be prepared to agree to the reasonable demands of the Transvaal burghers.

In the meanwhile Parliament had met at home,[1] and a paragraph was inserted in the Queen's Speech:

A rising in the Transvaal has recently imposed upon me the duty of taking military measures with a view to the prompt vindication of my authority, and has of necessity set aside for the time any plan for securing to the European settlers that full control over their own local affairs, without prejudice to the interests of the natives, which I have been desirous to confer.

On February 8, Lord Kimberley telegraphed[2] to General Sir Evelyn Wood, then in command:

Inform President Brand that, if Boers cease from armed opposition, Her Majesty's Government will be ready to give all personal guarantees after submission; that a scheme will be formed with a view to permanent friendly settlement of difficulties; and that Her Majesty's Government will be glad if President will communicate this and former messages to him to leaders of the Boers.

On February 12 Mr. Kruger wrote to Sir George Pomeroy-Colley:

[1] January 6, 1881.
[2] The Ingogo fight had taken place the day before.

The people have repeatedly declared their willingness on the annulling of the annexation to work together with Her Majesty's Government in all things which can serve the whole of South Africa. . . . While, however, the annexation is persisted in, and the shedding of blood by your Excellency continues, then will we submit ourselves to our fate under our God, and to the last man strive against the injustice and violence done to us, and throw the responsibility of all the misery which will visit this land entirely on your shoulders.

To this Sir George Colley replied on February 21:

As soon as the Boers now in arms against Her Majesty's authority discontinue their armed resistance, Her Majesty's Government is prepared to appoint a Commission with extensive powers, which may develop the scheme which is alluded to in Lord Kimberley's telegram of the 8th inst., and which was communicated to you by His Honour President Brand.

The reply to this was dated February 28, two days after Amajuba had been fought and lost:

Your letter of the 21st of February, 1881, reached me to-day, the 28th of February, when I arrived back from inspection. In conjunction with the members of the Government here, I have the satisfaction in my own and their name to inform you that we are very thankful for the declaration of your Excellency in the name of the Government of Her Majesty, that under certain conditions they are prepared to stop hostilities; that it appears to us that now, for the first time since the unhappy day of the annexation, an opportunity occurs of coming to a friendly settlement; that our heart bleeds for the necessity of shedding further blood, as well the blood of our burghers as that of your brave soldiers; that in our opinion a meeting of different men from both sides would perhaps speedily lead to a satisfactory result; we therefore have the honour to propose that a committee of men shall be chosen by you and us, with suitable and sufficient authority to establish and to ratify the preliminaries of an honourable peace.

It is alleged in defence of Mr. Gladstone's policy that, as the negotiations for a peace were commenced before the defeat of Amajuba, that disaster afforded no justification for abandoning them. But it should be remembered, in the first place, that the movement of Sir George Colley which resulted in Amajuba was made entirely within the undisputed territory of Her Majesty the Queen, and that the invasion of Natal could not be regarded as an essential step in the struggle for independence. And, in the second, there was no kind of suggestion in any of the telegrams preceding Majuba that the supremacy of the Queen in the Transvaal was to be repudiated. It would indeed have argued a false sense of honour, had a collison between our troops and the Boers, resulting in disaster to ourselves, been treated as a fatal obstacle to

granting terms which we were prepared to concede before it occurred. That, however, was not the case; for even after Majuba Lord Kimberley approved of the telegram which Sir Evelyn Wood sent (March 3) to President Brand:

I gratefully acknowledge your Honour's continuous efforts in the cause of peace, and I cordially desire such may ensue without further bloodshed. I know and esteem many of those now in arms against my Sovereign, and I therefore regret doubly they will not, by desisting from armed opposition, open the door to arrangements which I conscientiously believe might be rendered acceptable to every reasonable Afrikander.

It is obvious, therefore, that the position of Her Majesty's Ministers prior to, and even after, the disaster of Majuba was that the abandonment of opposition by the Boers was a condition precedent to all negotiation. In their eyes the Boers were rebels, to whom it might be possible to offer the most generous conditions, but with whom it was impossible to negotiate on equal terms as belligerents. This is clear from Lord Kimberley's telegram to Sir Evelyn Wood on March 8, in which he states that Her Majesty's Government would be ready in any settlement to grant complete amnesty to all—excepting only persons who have committed, or are directly responsible for, acts contrary to rules of civilized warfare. And the same idea was obviously in the mind of Mr. Hofmeyr, who telegraphed on the same day (March 8) from Cape Town to Joubert:

Believe British Government anxious to meet wishes of Boers, but difficulty is how to grant concession either before you have desisted from opposition or British arms victorious. We pray you help Government by adopting conciliatory tone and offering to desist from armed opposition on tacit understanding that no further use be made by British of such desisting than to send limited number of troops across border and provisioning garrisons.

Three days later Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed again to Joubert:

In any case, before the Commission can be appointed, either the British arms must have conquered, or the Boers must have given tangible proof of submission in the eyes of the world.

And on March 13 Lord Kimberley telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Wood:

Inform Boer leaders that, if Boers will undertake to desist from armed opposition and disperse to their homes, we are willing to name the follow-

ing as Commissioners: Sir Hercules Robinson, Chief Justice de Villiers, and yourself. President Brand should be asked to be present as representing friendly State. Commission should be authorized to consider following points: Complete self-government under British suzerainty, with British Resident at Pretoria, and provisions for protection of native interests and as to frontier affairs. Control of relations with foreign Powers to be reserved.

This is the first indication of a willingness on the part of Her Majesty's Government to annul the annexation; but even then, a fortnight after Majuba, this concession was made conditional upon the Boers desisting from armed opposition, and dispersing to their homes.

Lord Kimberley quietly shelved his demand for that abandonment of resistance which even Mr. Hofmeyr and the Cape Dutch considered an essential preliminary to an arrangement. On March 21, Sir Evelyn Wood telegraphed him an epitome of the negotiations, which occupied twelve and a half hours without intermission, and of which this is the issue:

The Boer leaders accept the terms offered in the telegram of the 17th of March. They state: 'We will trust to the British Government to give us complete self-government as soon as possible, and at latest within six months, it being understood that no civil action be entertained in respect to proceedings taken during or in reference to the war, and equally no action shall be taken in respect of taxation until the self-government is accorded.'

In reply, Lord Kimberley telegraphed on March 22, authorizing ratification of terms:

In a despatch to Sir Hercules Robinson on March 31, the Colonial Secretary says:

Entire freedom of action will be accorded to the Transvaal Government so far as is not inconsistent with the rights expressly reserved to the suzerain Power. The term 'suzerainty' has been chosen as most conveniently describing superiority over a State possessing independent rights of government subject to reservations with reference to certain specified matters.

The most material of these reserved rights is the control of the external relations of the future Transvaal State, which will be vested in the British Government, including, of course, conclusion of treaties and the conduct of diplomatic intercourse with foreign Powers. As regards communication with foreign Governments, it will probably be found most convenient that the Transvaal Government should correspond on such matters with Her Majesty's Government through the Resident and the High Commissioner. . . . The provision in the Sand River Convention against slavery in any form must of course be reaffirmed. Perhaps on some matters of especial importance affecting the natives it might be provided that the suzerain

Power should have a veto upon any new legislation.[1] Whatever provisions are made, it will be one of the duties of the British Resident to report to the High Commissioner as to their working and observations.... It is scarcely to be hoped that political passions will immediately calm down, and Her Majesty's Government are bound to take care that those who have been faithful to the British cause during the late war shall not suffer any detriment in consequence of their loyalty. Her Majesty's Government have agreed to a complete amnesty to those who have taken part with the Boers, and the Boers on their side have engaged that no one shall suffer any detriment on account of his political opinions. It will be your duty to lay down full and explicit conditions for securing to those who have been loyal to Her Majesty, whether of English or Dutch origin, full liberty to reside in the country, with enjoyment of all civil rights and protection to their person and property. . . . On reference to the Constitution of the former South African Republic, I find that there are articles which appear to infringe upon the principle of religious toleration. I am not aware that any actual impediment was placed by the State in the way of the free exercise of their religion by persons not belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church ; but to prevent any misconception on the point, it will be well to provide for the unobstructed exercise of their religion by all denominations within the future Transvaal State. . . . With regard to the formal style and designation of the future Transvaal State, I am disposed to think that, instead of reviving the name 'South African Republic'—which never was appropriate, having regard to the fact that there were two Republics in South Africa—it would be preferable to adopt the name 'Transvaal State.' Before the annexation, the country was very commonly spoken of as the Transvaal, and it would be convenient, as in the case of the Orange Free State, to describe it by the river which forms its southern boundary.

The Convention was signed on April 5, 1881.

Few documents in our history are less pleasant reading than the proclamation issued by Sir Hercules Robinson, on April 4, 1881, to the 'Chief Headmen and Natives of the Transvaal.'[2] But among the few is certainly the report

[1] The attitude of the Boers towards the natives can be gathered from a letter dated December 29, 1880, signed by P. A. Cronje. It was addressed to the Montsioa: 'Take notice that as soon as you or any of your people are found armed fighting against the burghers of the South African Republic, which Government is again restored, and whereof Paul Kruger, Martinus Pretorius and Piet Joubert form the Government, or lend assistance to our enemies, the English Government, whom we have nearly worked out everywhere, we will consider you and your people as our enemies and treat you as such. We have always considered you and your people as the friends of the Boers, and we are willing to treat you as our friends—that is, if you remain peaceable, because we alone are able to work out the English. But you can send your people to help us work our corn on our farms, and for which we will pay your people and treat them well.'

[2] 'You have been called together to hear from us, the representatives of the Queen of England, what Her Majesty's Government has decided as to the future settlement of this country. You are aware that a little more than fours years ago the Transvaal was annexed to the Queen's dominion. This was done because it was then believed that a majority of those who had a voice in the government preferred such annexation to the rule of those who were then in power. Subsequent events have shown that this belief was mistaken, and Her Majesty's Government, with that sense of justice which befits a great and powerful nation, gave orders

which Mr. H. C. Shepstone,[1] who was Secretary for Native Affairs, addressed to Sir Hercules on August 3, 1881:

I have the honour to report that the chiefs named in the accompanying list were present at the meeting yesterday to hear the final decision of the Royal Commission regarding the retrocession of the land to the Boers.

When the Royal Commission left, the chiefs all got very excited, and expressed great dissatisfaction, both at the tidings told them of the terms upon which they and the country were to be handed over to the Boers, and at the fact of their not having been allowed to speak expressing their opinions as to the retrocession. They asked whether it was thought that they had no feelings or hearts that they were thus treated as a stick or a piece of tobacco, which could be passed from hand to hand without question. . . . Most of the chiefs spoke, and all to the same effect, deprecating the return of the country to Boer rule. I will mention what some of the principal chiefs said.

Umgombarie, from the Zoutpansberg, said: 'I am Umgombarie. I have fought with the Boers, and have many wounds, and they know that what I say is true. Up to this day my kraals were in the rocks and the mountains. I had arranged to move down into the plains, but under the circumstances stated here to-day I will not do so. I will never consent to place myself under their rule. I belong only to the English Government, I am not a man who eats with both sides of his jaw at once; I only use one side. I am English. I have said.'

Gwapani said: 'Oh, Sir Chief, we black people have been treated as beasts of burden. We were found by the Boers here, and they pierced our noses, and made us pack oxen, and made us work, giving us very heavy loads. We got sore backs from the weight. When we were getting old in work, and not knowing how to get rid of our burdens, we heard that there was an English Government which treats black people fairly and justly, and did not treat them as dogs and beasts of burden. And truly, after a time the English Government came, and we then found that the pack-oxen had really an owner, as they were taken care of and nursed, and their sores cured. . . . We then saw and felt that we were really people, and treated as such. How did we see this? By the fact of our getting wages for our work, and also that any complaints or any grievances we might have, we had only to go to the proper officials to get justice and our rights. Why do not the Government set apart land for us black people, so that we might have nothing to do with the Boers? I do not intend returning to my old thraldom under Boer rule. I have given myself under the English. All the people applauded this speech.

Silamba says: 'I belong to the English; I will never return under the Boers. You see me, a man of my rank and position. Is it right that

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that the country should be given back to its former rulers, under certain conditions which have been framed by us and agreed to by the representatives of the burghers. These representatives—Messrs. Kruger, Pretorius and Joubert—I now have much pleasure in introducing to you. In the conditions to which I have said they agree, your interests have not been overlooked. All existing laws will be maintained, and no future enactment which specially affects your interests will have any effect until the Queen has approved of it. I am anxious that you should clearly understand this to-day, and realize that, although there will be a change in the form of government, your rights, as well as your duties, will undergo no alteration.'

[1] C. 3098, p. 74.

such as I should be seized and laid on the ground and flogged, as has been done to me and the other chiefs?'

Sinkanhla said: 'We hear, and yet do not hear. We cannot understand. We are troubling you, chief, by talking in this way. We hear the chiefs say that the Queen took the country because the people of the country wished it, and, again, that the majority of the owners of the country did not wish her rule, and that, therefore, the country was given back. We should like to have the man pointed out from amongst us black people who objects to the rule of the Queen. We are the real owners of the country. We were here when the Boers came, and, without asking leave, settled down, and treated us in every way badly. The English Government then came and took the country. We have now had four years of rest and peaceful and just rule. We have been called here to-day, and are told that the country—our country—has been given to the Boers by the Queen. This is a thing which surprises us. Did the country, then, belong to the Boers? Did it not belong to our fathers and forefathers before us, long before the Boers came here? We have heard that the Boers' country is at the Cape. If the Queen wishes to give them their land, why does she not give them back the Cape?'

Sigubu said: 'Of all the chiefs in the country, I was the first to fight with the Boers. On their first arrival they sent to me, asking for men to work, and I sent thirty men. Not satisfied with this, the Boers, though my men were still working, came to take my corn, and I fought. This wound on my head is a Boer wound. I fought for a long time, but was at last forced to fly, and I went to Sikukuni's country. I returned to my old country on hearing that English rule was established. Now the old state of things will return, and there will be endless complaints for the English chiefs to settle. We are not satisfied with Boer rule. We have experienced English rule, and will not return to Boer rule.'

Matuka said: 'Since the Royal Commission has informed us that the country is to be given back to Boer rule again, we feel our old sores and wounds beginning to itch and smart. They will all be reopened. There will now be constant complaints of ill-treatment and injustice brought to this chief who, you tell us, is placed to see that we are properly treated, until at last he will call out to the Queen to come and help to stop the ill-treatment and injustice complained of. We leave you with sore hearts. We have no hope in the future.'

Umkanhila said: 'I see that we are only troubling the chief by this talk. I am still English, as I told Somtseu when he called us together at Pretoria shortly after he took the country. I am not changed. This country belonged to our fathers, and was taken by Umzilikazi from us, and we lived under him. Dingaan then came, and drove Umzilikazi away. The Boers afterwards came, and we lived with them. I do not know what to say. The country I am in was my father's, and his father's before him. I cannot leave it. The Boers are all around me. I have no room to turn round.'

Umyethile said: 'We have no heart to talk. I have returned to the country from Sechelis, where I had to fly from Boer oppression. Our hearts are black and heavy with grief to-day at the news told us. We are in agony; our intestines are twisting and writhing inside of us, just as you see a snake do which has been struck on the head. We have given ourselves over to the English ever and for all, and will not retrace our steps. Our bodies, on hearing that we are to be given back to the Boer rule, began to ache again in the old scars. We do not know what has become of us, but we feel dead. It may be that the Lord may change the nature of the Boers, and that we will not be treated like dogs and

beasts of burden as formerly; but we have no hope of such a change, and we leave you with heavy hearts and great apprehension as to the future.'

Mamaghali by his grandson says that: 'I am old now, and cannot move about. This is caused by ill-treatment and floggings from the Boers, not by old age. I say that this country is ours, and not the Boers' country, and ought to be given to us if it is given to its rightful owners. It belonged to our fathers before us. All that I can see for us to do is now to die for it.'

Ububendi, representing Umyabelu (Mapoch), states: 'The country I am living in, as you, our chief, know, was our fathers' before us. We never gave it to the Boers; we fought about it, and drove the Boers away. Those who remained got the permission of my father Mapoch. We gave ourselves and our country to the English Government, but if the English Government is going away, we demand our country back. We will not submit to the Boers.'

Another chief said it was 'no use talking in this way to me'; that the Boer leaders, Paul Kruger, Pretorius, and Joubert, should be present to hear what they said; and that they would not submit to their rule.

All the chiefs, with the exception of Sibidiyela, either spoke or signified their assent to the above sentiments, deprecating very fervently any return to Boer rule.

One chief, Jan Sibilo, who has been, he informed me, personally threatened with death by the Boers after the English leave, could not restrain his feelings, but cried like a child.

Meanwhile, the ink on the Convention was hardly dry before the Triumvirate had altered the name of the Transvaal State to that of the South African Republic.

How sudden had been our change of front may be seen by comparing certain dates. Our first reverse occurred at Laing's Nek on January 28, and the preliminaries of a humiliating peace were settled on March 21! In commenting on Laing's Nek, Lord Kimberley said at Manchester:

As far as South Africa is concerned, the Liberal Government had forced upon them the conduct of a war which they deeply regretted, but for which they were not primarily responsible; but it was necessary in order to vindicate the authority of the Crown. Much as they deplored the necessity, they would not flinch from the necessity which had been forced upon them by the policy of their predecessors in office; but, at the same time, they would, as soon as the authority of the Crown had been vindicated, take such steps as would, he hoped, lead to the creation of free institutions in Africa, and institutions of which it could not be said that they had been forced on an unwilling people.

We have seen that the Prime Minister and his colleagues inserted in the Speech from the Throne a paragraph insisting upon the necessity of vindicating the Queen's authority. Came the instructions to Sir Hercules Robinson, who had succeeded Sir Bartle Frere:

Her Majesty's Government have anxiously looked forward to the time when it might be possible to confer such (free) institutions on the Transvaal; but the recent news of an attempt to overthrow the Queen's sovereignty by armed forces made it useless to discuss arrangements which can only be practicable when the authority of the Crown has been vindicated and tranquillity is firmly assured.

In a debate in the Commons a little before Laing's Nek, Mr. Chaplin had taunted Mr. Gladstone with having (in his Midlothian speeches) pledged himself to the repudiation of the annexation; and Mr. Gladstone had replied:

The honourable member supposes that the word 'repudiate' bears no sense except that of intention to reverse a thing, although the word does not necessarily bear any such sense at all. . . . To disapprove the annexation of a country is one thing; to abandon that annexation is another. By the annexation of the Transvaal we acquired two obligations. First, there was the obligation entailed towards the English and other settlers in the Transvaal, perhaps including a minority, though a very small minority, of the Dutch Boers themselves; secondly, there was the obligation towards the native races, an obligation which I may call an obligation of humanity and justice; and, thirdly, there was the political obligation we entailed upon ourselves in respect of the responsibility which was already incumbent upon us, and which was by the annexation largely extended for the future peace and tranquillity of South Africa.

And in the same debate the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies had been moved thus to declare himself:

The Boers had thrown down the gauntlet to the British Empire, and it was idle to talk about any settlements that might ensue upon peace until at least there was some prospect of peace. *Parcere subjectis* was an admirable maxim, but a Government which did not remember *debellare superbos* was equally its duty could not claim the confidence of the British people.

Yet within two months these resolves not to flinch from any sacrifices necessary for the vindication of the Queen's authority; this acceptance of the challenge thrown down by the Boers; this recognition of the various obligations incurred by the Government—all had vanished as though they had never been. Yet something had happened. It was difficult then for Englishmen, as it has been difficult since, to believe that the defeat of a handful of troops within the Queen's territory had imposed upon her Ministers the acceptance of a set of terms at least as humiliating as could have been extorted from them by a long, disastrous, and exhausting war. Yet, so far as the public was concerned,

there was nothing to account for their amazing and disheartening collapse except the incident of Amajuba Hill. What really influenced them was not officially explained till 1899, when, in extraordinary circumstances, the statesman primarily responsible for the management of colonial affairs in 1881 spoke out, and made a clean breast of it. In that year Lord Kimberley addressed a public meeting at Sheffield. He had apparently been roused by the abuse of Mr. Gladstone's 'magnanimity' then finding utterance;[1] and he went into detail to show—what had long been suspected, but never authoritatively confirmed—that not magnanimity, but the kind of prudence which is sometimes called by an uglier name, was responsible for the surrender of Majuba. He told his audience that it was no reluctance to incur the charge of blood-guiltiness, as Mr. Gladstone had affirmed it was, which caused him and his colleagues to reverse the policy to which they were publicly committed, for that, as matter of fact, their surrender was mainly due to representations by President Brand, to the effect that, with all the good-will in the world, he could not hold in his burghers if the war went on, and in this way the old Pecksniffian legend got its quietus.[2]

Yet the statement that Mr. Gladstone had been suddenly smitten with qualms as to the righteousness of his policy had been circulated and accepted as the official statement, and passes muster with a number of good, but unreasoning, folk unto this day. In effect, it was the best that, in the circumstances, Her Majesty's Ministers could propound. It was too preposterous to suppose that an incident relatively so insignificant as Amajuba could deflect a powerful Ministry from a line of policy to which it was committed in the most solemn and formal manner. To the Gladstonian Englishman, whose name at the time was Legion, the official ex-

[1] In an interjectional remark he had already repudiated the imputation of the historic debate raised by Lord Cairns in the House of Lords on March 31, 1881.

[2] It is worth noting that Lord Kimberley appears to have instantly repented him of his candour, and to have communicated his repentance to the reporters of the news-agency which supplies the press generally with records of public speeches. Certain it is that this singularly interesting admission found no place in the reports of the speech which appeared in most of the London and provincial papers. Lord Kimberley's authority, however, could not reach the reporters of the local press, and so it came to pass that additional emphasis was given to his explanation by his very anxiety to withhold it from the eye of the general public.

planation only added a touch of sanctity to his peculiar saint. His judgment would have been vastly different, and his meditations might have taken a far more serious turn than they did, had he but known the truth as it was blurted out at Sheffield. Most unfortunately for our position in South Africa, that truth was known and appreciated by every white man in the colonies and the Republic; and if a starting-point must be selected from which to date the history of our recent troubles, it must be that memorable day on which President Brand convinced Mr. Gladstone that Dutch South Africa was too much for the British Empire. The consequences of this disclosure of an *arcanum imperii* were felt in hundreds of ways from the Zambesi to Cape Agulhas. In some eighteen months Mr. Gladstone tried three different lines of policy with regard to South Africa. Each was disastrous; each involved peculiar and terrible consequences. Conjointly, they alienated the regard of every human being, white or black, who could think or feel, within the boundaries of our sphere of influence. The first was that of encouraging the Boers to rebel against the Queen. It is very likely that 'our miraculous Premier' never troubled himself about consequences. Indeed, he always seemed to think that the essential point was, not the interpretation put upon his language by friends and enemies alike, but the esoteric meaning it conveyed to himself. It was so when he dated his devotion to the cause of reform in Ireland from the explosion at Clerkenwell Gaol. This outrage, he said, had been to him as a chapel-bell calling his attention to Ireland. He never seemed to realize that the Irish rebel would take him to mean that outrage meant reform. It was so when he went out of his way to make an unprovoked attack upon the foreign policy of such an ally as Austria. It had been so years before when his assertion that Jefferson Davis had 'created a nation' embittered the existing bitterness towards us of the United States. It was so now, when he declared that, if the Transvaal were as valuable as he held it to be valueless, he would repudiate the annexation, because it had been improperly effected. He seemed to think that the effects of reckless utterance would disappear the moment he explained that it had been made in a position of greater

freedom and less responsibility. Yet had he every reason to know better. There can be no sort of doubt that the Boers of the Transvaal, together with their kinsmen in the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony, took his advice in Opposition as a direct incentive to revolt. Memorials, and votes of thanks, and appeals for fresh support, poured in upon him from all parts of South Africa.[1]

His second policy was the official one. His indictment of the annexation had done what he meant it to do in England. He had invited the electors to condemn Lord Beaconsfield's policy, and to install himself in power. They had complied; he was again in office, and there was no longer need for him to condemn a policy which he himself found it more convenient to pursue than to abandon. In South Africa the effect was to convince the Dutchman, who had hailed his advent to power, of the perfidy of British statesmanship. They had protested against the annexation as an unjust and ungenerous exercise of superior strength; but the wrong they held the Afrikanders to have sustained in it was not of the sort that rankles. It was otherwise with what they rightly held to be their betrayal by the new Prime Minister. They found themselves 'chucked' the moment they ceased to be useful in his campaign against Lord Beaconsfield; and they neither forgot it nor forgave.

So much for Policies I. and II. The effect of Policy III. was soon to compel for British authority the contempt of all men of English descent in South Africa, as well as that of all such native races as understood the position. I have set forth on a preceding page the disappointment and disgust with which the retrocession was received by the native chiefs. The feeling with which the British settlers in the Transvaal, who had taken up arms at the bidding of the Government to resist what they were told was a rebellion, received the news of their betrayal may best be gathered from the correspondence which passed between Mr. C. K. White, as their repre-

[1] Sir David Wedderburn, in the debate of January, 1881, from which I have already quoted, stated that he had received a petition from fifty Dutch South Africans who were students at Edinburgh University, protesting against the annexation, and stated, as a remarkable fact, the significance of which he apparently did not appreciate, that, out of these fifty, six only came from the Transvaal, the Orange Free State and Natal, the remaining forty-four being sons of residents in Cape Colony.

sentative, and Mr. Gladstone. Considering the provocation, the petition of these gentlemen was very moderate in tone. Mr. Gladstone's reply was so characteristic that I give it in full:[1]

LONDON,
June 1, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a communication signed by yourself and Mr. Fawell on behalf of a committee of the loyal inhabitants of the Transvaal.

I observe that a document of a more formal character is promised, and for this, as well as other reasons, I will not notice in full detail the several allegations in the paper before me.

At the same time, I desire to state with respect and sympathy as much as appears to be material.

It is stated, as I observe, that a promise was given by me that the Transvaal never should be given back. There is no mention of the terms or date of this promise. If the reference be to my letter of June 8, 1880, to Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, I do not think the language of that letter justifies the description given.

Nor am I sure in what manner or to what degree the fullest liberty to manage their local affairs, which I then said Her Majesty's Government desired to confer on the white population of the Transvaal, differs from the settlement now about being made in its bearings on the interests of those whom your committee represents. This object, Her Majesty's Government hoped, might have been attained by means of a South African confederation. Unfortunately, owing to the disinclination of the Cape Parliament to proceed with the scheme,[2] this hope was frustrated. Against the information then given us of the intention formed by the Dutch settlers in December, 1879, we had at that time to set the official assurances which we received from South Africa. But the insurrection in the Transvaal proved in the most unequivocal manner that the large majority of the white settlers were strongly opposed to British rule, and were prepared to make the greatest sacrifices to recover their self-government. It was thus shown that the original ground upon which the Transvaal was annexed,[3] namely, that the white settlers were prepared, if not to welcome, at all events to acquiesce in British rule, was entirely devoid of foundation, while no hope any longer remained of leading them by a prospect of confederation to an altered view. In these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government have thought it their duty to avail themselves of the earliest inclinations on the part of the Boers of a disposition to a reasonable adjustment in order to terminate a war which threatened the most disastrous consequences, not only to the Transvaal, but to the whole of South Africa.

Her Majesty's Government willingly and thankfully acknowledge the loyal co-operation which Her Majesty's forces received at Pretoria and elsewhere by the inhabitants, and we sympathize with the privations and sufferings which they endured. I must, however, observe that so great

[1] 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 500.

[2] Messrs. Kruger and Joubert boasted to Mr. Leonard Courtney, with more than their wonted veracity, that it was exclusively to their machinations that the defeat of the federation scheme in the Cape Parliament was due.

[3] There is, I have shown, no authority at all for this version of the cause of annexation.

was the preponderance of the Boers who rose in arms against the Queen's authority, that the whole country except the posts occupied by the British troops fell at once practically into their hands. Again, the memorialists themselves only estimate the proportion of settlers not Transvaal Boers at one-seventh. Nearly, though not quite, the whole of the Boers have appeared to be united in sentiment, and Her Majesty's Government could not deem it their duty to set aside the will of so large a majority by the only possible means, namely, the permanent maintenance of a powerful military force in the country. Such a course would have been inconsistent alike with the spirit of the treaty[1] of 1852 and with the grounds on which the annexation was sanctioned and with the general interests of South Africa, which especially require that harmony should prevail between the white races.

On the other hand, in the settlement which is now in progress, every care will be taken to secure to the settlers, of whatever origin, the full enjoyment of their property and all civil rights, and whilst Her Majesty's Government cannot recognise any general claim for compensation in respect of depreciation of property arising from the change of policy involved in the new arrangement, the question of compensation to either side for acts committed during the late troubles not justified by the necessities of war has been remitted to the Commission.

I am, sir,
Your obedient servant,
C. K. WHITE, ESQ., W. E. GLADSTONE.

To this effusion Mr. White retorted in a letter which sums up the British case. I regret its length has necessitated its excision, for it deserves the most careful study.[2]

Those too young to remember the circumstances in which this degrading transaction was acquiesced in by the English people find it hard to believe that it was accomplished without an outburst of indignation from one end of the land to the other. The explanation, however, is not very abstruse. The Opposition existed only in name. Lord Beaconsfield was dying, and the party was paralyzed by the unexpected and crushing results of the General Election which had brought his rival back to power. Few in England had more than an elementary acquaintance with the simplest facts connected with South Africa, and they were members of a discredited minority. Moreover, the late Government's record as concerned South Africa was not sufficiently brilliant to induce the party leaders to force the subject to the front. Lord Carnarvon, who might have spoken with some authority, was regarded with suspicion and dislike by many of his colleagues, who held him (not without justice) to be in part responsible for

[1] It was not a treaty, but a convention.

[2] A full report is given in Carter's 'Narrative of the Boer War,' pp. 502, 541, *et seq.*, and will repay perusal.

the disaster of 1880. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, his successor at the Colonial Office, had never shown any grasp of the problem he had to solve. He—to use Sir Bartle Frere's words—had laid the train of powder which destroyed the High Commissioner, though his successors had fired it. His defence of his own policy and his indictment of that which supplanted it were merely perfunctory. But for the magnificent oration of Lord Cairns in the Lords, the most signal act of betrayal of the public interests and the national honour ever perpetrated by a British Ministry would have passed almost uncondemned. And if the leaders of opinion were thus ignorant and indifferent, it was scarce to be expected that opinion itself should be better informed or more active.

If it be thought that compensation for the resentment of the betrayed and deserted loyalists would be found in the gratitude of the Transvaal Boers, the belief will be corrected by a reference to the debates in the Volksraad, where member after member rose to denounce the Convention. Mr. Van der Heven stated that 'if he dared to approve of the Convention, his constituents would stone him to death.' Mr. Otto, the member for Standerton, affirmed that 'he had been distinctly forbidden by his constituents to ratify the Convention.' On Article XII., which provided that no person who had remained loyal to Her Majesty during the recent hostilities should suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty, Mr. Van der Heven asked 'whether it is just that, when their flesh and blood voluntarily went over to the British side to shed blood, they should be pardoned. No country or Power would allow it. His constituents are dead against it.' Mr. Pretorius 'would agree with Mr. Van der Heven, but the Boers have lost their chance.' Mr. Taljaard is 'obliged to submit, because it has been agreed to.' Mr. Franz Joubert said: 'This is called a Convention. . . . But this document represents nothing more than terms dictated by a conqueror to barbarous and untrustworthy subjects.' Mr. Piet Joubert said: 'Those who came after the annexation should not be placed on the same footing as those who lived in the country before the annexation, and knew to what government and laws they had to subject themselves.' Mr. Lemmer objected to the whole Conven-

tion. Quoth Mr. Spies: 'When I see the obligation of the Triumvirate—namely, that it pledges itself that the Volksraad would accept this convention—it must have been done under pressure. The people would never have submitted to it; they would have fought to the last man. I will never voluntarily consent to the adoption of this Convention. If we reject, bombs and cannon will play amongst us. I hope that some means may be devised to get us out of the difficulty.' Mr. H. Joubert objected to Article XIII., 'because it placed the natives on equal footing with the whites.' Mr. V. P. Joubert declared it as his opinion 'that this Convention was obtained by pressure and under influence, and added: 'I blame not the Triumvirate but they are not bound by it.' These extracts are taken from the reports of the public meetings. What passed in secret session it is impossible to say.

The end of the matter was that, after Lord Kimberley had stated that the Convention must be ratified as it was modified, the Volksraad ratified it in these terms:[1]

> The Volksraad is not satisfied with this Convention, and considers that the members of the Triumvirate performed a fervent act of love for the fatherland when they, upon their own responsibility, signed such an unsatisfactory State document. . . . The English Government acknowledges indirectly by this answer that the difficulties raised by the Volksraad are neither fictitious nor unfounded, inasmuch as it desires from us the concesssion that we, the Volksraad, shall submit the Convention to a practical test. . . . Therefore it is that the Volksraad hereby unanimously resolves not to go into further discussion upon the Convention, and maintaining the objections to the Convention as made before the Royal Commission or stated in the Volksraad, and for the purpose of showing to everybody that the love of peace and unity inspires it for so long, and provisionally submitting the articles of the Convention to a practical test, hereby complying with the request of the English Government contained in the telegram of the 13th of October, 1881, proceeds to ratify the Convention of the 3rd of August.

Clearly, Majuba did not satisfy the Transvaal Boer, while it exasperated to the last degree the settlers of British origin, crushed the hopes of the native races, revived the possibility of a struggle between black and white impossible under British domination. Let us see how Majubanimity affected the Queen's Dutch subjects in the Cape Colony. It has been demonstrated in the preceding pages that, but

[1] Carter's 'Narrative of the Boer War,' p. 557.

for their encouragement, there would have been no overt opposition to the annexation; that it was they, assisted by their friends in the Orange Free State, who supplied the funds to send the several deputations to England; that, while Dutch prints in the Transvaal were acknowledging the benefits resulting from the *pax Britannica*, Dutch prints in the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State were denouncing the incorporation of the South African Republic as fatal to the dream of a United South Africa under its own flag; and that it was in some measure the pressure put on Mr. Gladstone by the Cape Dutch which induced him to reverse the policy to which he was pledged. As we shall see later, there would have been no possibility of a struggle between Boer and Briton to-day had it not been for the reliance of the Transvaal leaders in the co-operation of the Cape Colony Dutch. Meanwhile, it might have been hoped that the surrender in 1881 to Dutch pressure, or prejudice, or sentiment, would have been acknowledged with some civil words of gratitude, or at least by the temporary suspension of the anti-English propagandism which the events of 1880-81 had called forth. So far, however, was this from being the case that the late concessions only served to make the dream of a Dutch South Africa more taking and imperious than before. The first-fruits of Majubanimity were the establishment of the Afrikander Bond on a distinctly anti-English basis. There is some dispute as to the ownership of the doubtful honours of paternity, but it has been persistently claimed by the Rev. S. J. Du Toit (then editor of *Die Patriot* published at the Paarl), afterwards Minister of Education under the Triumvirate. Certain it is that in 1884, after the ratification of the second Convention, he declared, at a banquet given at Amsterdam in honour of himself and his colleagues, that 'the South African flag shall yet wave from Table Bay to the Zambesi, be that end accomplished by blood or by ink. If blood it is to be, we shall not lack the men to spill it.' Also, he was one of the first to attempt a raid on Bechuanaland, and on his return to Cape Colony he was the principal leader of the Bond he had done so much to establish. He subsequently executed one of those sudden changes of front which are not uncommon in South

African politics; but the motives of his conversion in the later nineties have nothing to do with the objects of the Afrikander Bond, which he founded between 1879 and 1881. Other claimants are Mr. F. W. Reitz, some time a Judge of the Orange Free State, of which he became President on the death of Sir John Brand, and Mr. Carl Borckenhagen, editor of the *Bloemfontein Express*, whose great abilities were only equalled by his violent hatred of England and things English. Mr. Reitz was subject to periods of mental aberration, which disqualified him at times for the discharge of the various duties which he had assumed; and in the fatal extravagances he committed as Secretary of State to the South African Republic, in succession to Dr. Leyds, it is charitable to suppose that we may trace the effects of disease.

As may be gathered from the formidable Address of Congratulation read at the first celebration of the independence of the Transvaal at the national festival at Paardekraal on December 13, 1881, so far as a purely Dutch South Africa is concerned, the Bond is nothing if not 'Thorough':

ADDRESS[1]

PRESENTED TO THE HONOURABLE CHAIRMAN AND THE PEOPLE OF THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC, ASSEMBLED AT PAARDEKRAAL TO CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC.

HONOURABLE CHAIRMAN AND PEOPLE, MEN AND BRETHREN,—

It is for us, the undersigned members of the Afrikander Bond of the ward Middle Valsch River, in the district of Kroonstad, and burghers of the Orange Free State, a necessity of the heart to offer to the people of our sister Republic our heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the celebration of your thanksgiving festival relative to the newly-obtained independence of your people. Of course we celebrate this feast with you, and this glad day shall not alone remain life-long in our memory, but it will be handed down by tradition to our children also.

Long had the proud Briton persecuted a poor nation from post to post in this southern part of Africa, by grudging our dearly-loved freedom which we would not relinquish. With exemplary patience have we borne for years all their oppressions; but at last the measure of your patience was filled brim full through the attempt made to snatch from you your precious and dearly-bought freedom. Once more you attempted patiently during three years to revive with memorials the sense of justice of the British nation; your endeavours have been futile, and at last you resolved to take up the sword, and, as your case was a just one, to strike the tyrant in the power of the Lord. An heroism which stupefied the world[2] animated every one of you in a moment, and with a powerful arm

[1] C. 3098, p. 153.

[2] *Cf.* 'Staggered humanity.'

you struck the conqueror. Witness Bronkhorst Spruit, Laing's Nek, Ingogo, and Amajuba mountain. You fought under the protection of the Lord, otherwise how could the cruel implements of murder of the powerful Briton directed against your freedom have demanded so few bloody sacrifices?

A dead sleep of acquiescence in the injustices and oppressions of the Briton kept the love for freedom of the Afrikander in abeyance? Of course Britain can and may in a moment swallow us up wholly and deprive us of our freedom. This, in the South here, and elsewhere, was taught by the high officials of the people, and our tough patience begot for the African in general the name of coward. Yes, in our humble opinion the affairs had approached that point, that the freedom of both the South African Republics should have been exterminated without battle, and the Afrikans would in truth have deserved the detestable name of cowards. But then came the turning-point. You took up the sword, and struck the Briton with such force as not only upheld the honour of our forefathers, but earned the admiration and esteem of all nations in the world, whilst the Britons through fear revived that sense of justice to which they could not be brought by petitions. In short, your freedom was regained.

The whole of South Africa is, through the maintenance of your rights, awakened out of the sleep of slavery into which by degrees each oppressed nation will sink. But every true African has now a double conception of his dignity as a burgher, of his regained rights, and will know in future how to guard and esteem these, and no doubt many of us still alive will see in full bloom the tree of patriotism and *of the entire freedom of South Africa of which you have sown the seed in fruitful ground.*[1]

For all these reasons, highly-esteemed brethren and citizens of South Africa, you have earned the thanks of the whole country. You have also fought for us the battle of freedom.

Dear brethren, be and remain true to one another. Build up your Government on that solid and strong basis from which you can alone expect the prosperity of the people and the respect of your enemies, namely, the unconditional obedience of the burghers to the established authorities of the country and its proclaimed laws. Teach your children, even as we do teach ours, to act in the same manner in prosperity or adversity.

And we do prophesy that we shall no longer be strangers, *but the day will soon come that we shall enter with you on one arena for the entire independence of South Africa.*

The burghers of our ward—ay, the people of this whole State—are preparing themselves for that day. Let our conduct be always founded on justice. Let us take up the sword only when needed to protect our freedom and rights, and under the guidance of the Almighty we shall become a free and a great nation.

We subscribe ourselves with esteem your obedient servants and fellow-citizens, the members of the Afrikander Bond and others of the ward Middle Valsch River, district Kroonstad, Orange Free State.

J. H. W. WESSELS, *Chairman.*
S. J. M. WESSELS (and others).

DOORNKLOOF,
6th of December, 1881.

In 1881, under the heading of 'De Transvaalse Oorlog'

[1] The italics are mine.

('The Transvaal War'), a pamphlet was published by D. F. Du Toit and Co., of the Paarl, which consisted mainly of articles reprinted from *Die Patriot*. It may be noted, in passing, that in the same year *Die Patriot*, rightly or wrongly, boasted that it had done more to stir up the Transvaal Dutch to successful war against England than any other paper or influence in South Africa. In its encouragement of the Afrikander Bond it left no doubt as to its object.

This (it said) is now our time to establish the Bond while a national conscience has been awakened through the Transvaal War, and the Bond must be our preparation for the future confederation of all the States and colonies of South Africa. The English Government keeps talking of confederation under the British flag. That will never happen. We can assure them of that. We have often said it; there is just one hindrance to confederation, and that is the English flag. Let them take that away, and within a year the confederation under the free Afrikander flag would be established. But so long as the English flag remains here the Afrikander Bond must be our confederation. And the British will, after a while, realize that Froude's advice is the best for them. They must have Simons Bay as a naval and military station on the road to India, and give over all the rest of South Africa to the Afrikanders.

A few extracts more, and doubt as to the nature of the propaganda becomes impossible:

God's hand has been visible in the history of our people as it has not been since the days of Israel. Fear from God made the English soldiers powerless. Proud England was compelled to give the Boers back their land after her soldiers had been repeatedly beaten by a handful of Boers.

Might has run its race against right, and lost, and will never be able to renew the conflict on such favourable terms.

The little respect which the Afrikander still had for British troops and cannons has utterly gone away.

The Englishman has made himself hated, language and all, and this is well. English sovereignty over South Africa has now gone back nearly half a century.

And the members of the Bond are then instructed as to ways and means:

It must fight the traders, except those British who are willing to work with it. There must be no English shops, no English signboards, no English advertisements, no English book-keepers. Then, a National Bank must be started to displace the English banks. Next, manufactories of munitions of war must be started in the two Republics; the Transvaal and Free State must make their own ammunition and be well supplied with cannon, and provide a regiment of artillery to work them.

At Heidelburg there are already four thousand cartridges made daily,

and a few skilful Afrikanders have begun to make shells, too. That is right; so must we become a nation.

The English, to whom we have once sold land, you will never, never get rid of. Englishmen that will become Afrikanders by accepting our land and nation and language we are very willing to accept.

Now that the war against the English Government is over, the war against the English must begin.

English education has done more mischief to our country and nation than we can ever express.

War against the English speech in our Church. It is the Dutch Reformed Church. What has English to do in it?'

In our conversation we must still more oppose and expel the English.

It must be considered a disgrace to speak English.

In our family life, above all, a war without quarter must be carried on against the English.

This is our declaration of war against the English language. We call for volunteers. Who will join the war? All true Afrikanders, we hope.

A document,[1] published in Holland, was circulated at this time in South Africa, in which it is stated that the final object of the Afrikander Bond is summed up in its motto, 'Afrika voor de Afrikaners.'

The whole of South Africa belongs by just right to the Afrikaner nation. It is the privilege and duty of every Afrikaner to contribute all in his power towards the expulsion of the English usurper. The States of South Africa to be federated in one independent Republic.

The Afrikaner Bond prepares for this consummation. Argument in justification:

(*a*) The transfer of the Cape Colony to the British Government took place by circumstances of *force majeure*, and without the consent of the Dutch nation, who renounce all claim in favour of the Afrikaner or Boer nation.

(*b*) Natal is territory which accrued to a contingent of the Boer nation by purchase from the Zulu King, who received the consideration agreed for.

(*c*) The British authorities expelled the rightful owners from Natal by force of arms without just cause.

The task of the Afrikaner Bond consists in (*a*) procuring the staunch adhesion and co-operation of every Afrikaner and other real friend of the cause; (*b*) to obtain the sympathy, the moral and effective aid, of one or more of the world's Powers.

The means to accomplish those tasks are:

Personal persuasion, press propaganda, legislation, and diplomacy.

The direction of the application of these means is entrusted to a select body of members eligible for their loyalty to the cause and their abilities

[1] This will be found in 'Origin of the Anglo-Boer War Revealed,' p. 64, *et seq.* The author, Mr. C. H. Thomas, of Belfast, Transvaal, was formerly an Orange Free State Burgher.

and position. That body will conduct such measures as need the observance of special secrecy.[1] Upon the rest of the members will devolve activities of a general character under the direction of the selected chiefs.

One of the indispensable requisites is the proper organization of an effective fund which is to be regularly sustained. Bond members will aid each other in all relations of public life in preference to non-members.

In the efforts of gaining adherents to the cause, it is of importance to distinguish three categories of persons:

1. The class of Afrikaners who are to some extent deteriorated by assimilative influences with the English race, whose restoration to patriotism will need great efforts, discretion, and patience.

2. The apparently unthinking and apathetic class who prefer to relegate all initiative to leaders whom they will loyally follow. This class is the most numerous by far.

3. The warmly-patriotic class, including men gifted with intelligence, energy, and speech, qualified as leaders, and apt to exercise influence over the rest.

Among those three classes many exist whose views and religious scruples need to be corrected. Scripture abounds in proofs and salient analogies applying to the situation and justifying our cause. In this as well as in other directions the members who work in circulating written propaganda will supply the correct and conclusive arguments accessible to all.

Upon the basis of our just rights the British Government, if not the entire nation, is the usurping enemy of the Boer nation.

In dealing with an enemy it is justifiable to employ besides force also means of a less open character, such as diplomacy and strategem.

The greatest danger to Afrikanerdom is the English policy of Anglicizing the Boer nation, to submerge it by the process of assimilation.

A distinct attitude of holding aloof from English influences is the only remedy against that peril and for thwarting that insidious policy. It is only such an attitude that will preserve the nation in its simple faith and habits of morality, and provide safety against the dangers of contamination and pernicious examples with all their fateful consequences to body and soul. Let the Dutch language have the place of honour in schools and homes. Let alliances of marriage with the English be stamped as unpatriotic.

Let every Afrikaner see that he is at all times well armed with the best possible weapons, and maintain the expert use of the rifle among young and old, so as to be ready when duty calls and the time is ripe for asserting the nation's rights and be rid of English thraldom.

Employ teachers only who are animated with truly patriotic sentiments.

Let it be well understood that English domination will also bring religious intolerance and servitude, for it is only a very frail link which separates the English State Church from actual Romanism, and its proselytism *en bloc* is only a matter of short time.

Equally repugnant and dangerous is England's policy towards the coloured races, whom she aims, for the sake of industrial profit, at elevating to equal rank with whites, in direct conflict with Scriptural authority, a policy which incites coloured people to rivalry with their superiors, and can only end in common disaster.

[1] This was called the Commissie van Toezicht, or Supervision Committee.

Whilst remaining absolutely independent, the ties of blood relationship and language point to Holland for a domestic base.

As to commerce, Germany, America, and other industrial nations could more than fill the gap left by England, and such connections should be cultivated as a potent means towards obtaining foreign support to our cause and identification with it. If the mineral wealth of the Transvaal and Orange Free State becomes established—as appears certain from discoveries already made—England will not rest until those are also hers.

The leopard will retain its spots. The independence of both Republics is at stake on that account alone, with the risk that the rightful owners of the land will become the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the usurpers.

There is no alternative hope for the peace and progress of South Africa except by the total excision of the British ulcer.

Reliable signs are not wanting to show that our nation is designed by Providence as the instrument for the recovery of its rights and for the chastisement of proud, perfidious Albion.[1]

It would be easy for me to multiply such evidence almost indefinitely. I need not do so, because the Bond apologists maintain that its constitution was completely transformed when it was taken in hand by Mr. Hofmeyr. This contention is tantamount to an admission of the original charge. Such a defence might justify the action of the Bond after its transformation, but could in no wise refute the proposition that the Bond had its roots in violent race-hatred and a strong resolve that South Africa should be Dutch, and Dutch only. If a manager advertise a very prurient play, and thereby fill his theatre, we know something of the character of his patrons, even if at the last moment he should change his programme and fob them off with a piece of pure innocence. In such a case it would not be the comedy presented, but the comedy promised, which drew his house. In like manner, it was not the Bond in the constitutional shape it assumed by Mr. Hofmeyr's contrivance, but the Bond as it was formed, inspired and set going by Messrs. Du Toit, Borckenhagen, and Reitz, which drew into it the greater part of the Dutch in Cape Colony. Mr. Hofmeyr is the most astute politician South Africa has produced, and he well knew, when he took the Bond in hand, that Du. Toit and Co. were something 'too previous.' He knew, too, that the better-educated and more intelligent of his countrymen would stand aloof from a revolutionary movement which had not in itself so much as the elements of success. For

[1] The italics throughout are mine.

himself, it is more than likely that he never contemplated complete separation from the Empire. From the point of view of the Dutch Afrikander there was nothing to lose and little to gain by the withdrawal of British protection from the coasts of South Africa, and there is no reason to question the absolute sincerity of Mr. Hofmeyr's opposition to foreign intervention in the sub-continent. Probably his dream was of a South Africa protected by Great Britain from external attack, and internally so thoroughly independent that there could be no question of English ascendency. When he captured the Bond, there was an absolute Dutch majority in the Cape Colony, and nothing to indicate diminution of that majority, but rather the reverse. His object was, therefore, to maintain the Afrikander spirit, and to keep the Afrikander movement within constitutional limits. So far as he was personally concerned, there was just as much and just as little disloyalty in his aspiration as could be, and was, imputed to Mr. Parnell. Both statesmen (there is no other word for either) were prepared to accept the golden link of the Crown between South Africa in one case, Ireland in the other, and the British Empire. Both claimed for their respective countries the right of managing their own affairs on their own lines, free from the interference either of the Imperial Executive or of the British Parliament, and in both cases the objection to these aspirations was the same. Behind the leaders, both sincerely anxious (we will assume) to retain some connection with the British Empire, stood a mass of followers burning to have done with what they called 'the foreign yoke.' Until the discovery of gold in the Rand, the Dutch Afrikanders were confronted by just such a difficulty as still meets the Irish Nationalists—they were not strong enough to stand alone, and there was no quarter to which they could look for succour. Yet in the days when the Witwatersrand was indistinguishable from the sterile plains in which it was situate, the Dutch of the Cape Colony had always looked to the Transvaal as the Mecca of their race. Years before Sir George Grey had pointed out this cardinal fact to the Colonial Office as I have stated above.[1]

I have already shown that the word 'conspiracy' is

[1] See p. 75.

inapplicable to the case. Who says 'conspiracy' implies a secret organization for the propagation and encouragement of certain ideas which would not flourish if left to themselves. In this sense there was a conspiracy in England to overthrow the Stuarts at the time of the Revolution, as in our own day there have been various conspiracies to change the dynasty in Spain and in France. But although there were secret societies in Ireland at the close of the eighteenth century and in Italy in the middle of the nineteenth, there was no need of a conspiracy, in the one case to welcome a French invasion, and in the other to expel the Austrian. There is no need of conspiracy where the people of a nationality are agreed in a common sentiment. In such cases an organization may be essential to utilize and discipline the existing forces, but the drill-sergeant's methods and duties are not those of the recruiting-sergeant. The latter uses every kind of blandishment to win men to the colours. The drill-sergeant simply licks into shape the material thus provided. The Dutch Africanders had long since passed the enlisting stage, and the function of the Bond was to make a disciplined force of them. But just as the drill-sergeant presupposes the recruiting-sergeant, so the organization of the Bond presupposed the object for which Dutch Afrikanders were naturally and traditionally prepared. There were three causes which, up till a comparatively recent date, prevented the development of an ostensibly anti-English movement in South Africa. The first was the indifference displayed to colonial affairs by the Imperial Government till as late as the year 1870. Our colonists, whatever their nationality, were left so entirely to their own devices that, for good or ill, the Imperial bond was not felt to exist. There was no kicking against British authority so long as there was no such authority to kick at. When, in or about the year 1870, the dormant Imperial feeling was stirred into a semblance of life, the South African Dutch at once began to chafe. The annexation had quickened their apprehension that South Africa might become as completely Anglicized as Canada, or Australia, or New Zealand, and they at once avowed their resolve to be free of British control as far as in them lay. The events of 1877-1881 demonstrated their aspirations and

ambitions beyond the possibility of doubt, but it was not until the discovery of gold on the Rand that the realization of ambitions strongly entertained and never repudiated came within the sphere of practical politics. Yet it might have been clear to anyone who studied the question that if in 1858 the Cape Dutch were disposed passionately to espouse the cause of the emigrant farmers in the North, they would be still more fervently moved to do so at any time after the year 1886. At the earlier period the Dutch of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were living from hand to mouth with resources barely sufficient to enable them to cope with internal difficulties and the menace of native aggression; at the later the Transvaal Government had come into a mighty fortune, was able to buy whatever material modern science has placed at the disposal of armies, and enjoyed such a prosperity as made its friendship worth courting by European Powers. What need, then, of a conspiracy when the sympathy of South with North had been tried and tested, while the South African Republic was yet a poverty-stricken, struggling, and feeble State?

In what may be called the middle period we have indisputable evidence of the nature and object of the Bond. I would like, first, to set forth the description of the Bond as it was given by Mr. Schreiner in his evidence before the South African Committee of the House of Commons in 1897. Mr. Schreiner, as he explained to the Committee, was not a member of the Bond, though he presently held office with its support and patronage.[1]

> There is no greater falsehood (he said) that was perpetrated with regard to the Afrikander Bond and its members than the constant attempt to represent them as disloyal. They are thoroughly loyal; perhaps they are patriotic first; they do not want any clash ever to arise between patriotism and loyalty, and I hope none ever will. But it is a slander on them to insinuate that they are disloyal.

Mr. Schreiner is a thoroughly honest man, but his is that subtle, hair-splitting intellect which caused an acute observer to describe him as 'Gladstone without inspiration.' We shall see from his own evidence how he anticipated that 'loyalty' and 'patriotism' would run in double harness.

[1] The following quotations are taken from the report in the blue-book of the proceedings of the Select Committee on British South Africa, 1897.

For the moment I return to his description of the Afrikander Bond:

The Afrikander Bond is an organization which swallowed a previous organization, which was called the Boerenbeschermings Vereeniging, or union of farmers; the Afrikander Bond took a rather wider basis, and the front principle upon its platform is loyalty to the Crown,[1] and that is not merely an assertion, though I will not for a moment tell the committee it does not include members who may be extremists in the opposite direction, for of course every such organization will contain some such; but speaking as a body it is a loyal organization, and everybody who has been familiar with Africa for years will say so. The main object is to bring to bear the influence of the land, the country part of the population, and a very healthy influence, as I consider, upon politics. It represents almost entirely what we may call country districts; it is not a town organization; it flourishes in the country, not in the towns, and its members of course are to a very great extent of Dutch origin, because the Dutch are, after all, the farming people of the country. . . . That is what you may call the Bond. It is an exponent of the views and an organization that endeavours to give force to the views of the old country party in Cape Colony (Q. 3348).

Asked whether it represented a considerable influence which was represented in the Cape Parliament, Mr. Schreiner said:

Yes, very considerably represented; so considerably represented that a united Bond, while it cannot maintain by itself a Ministry in office—it is not numerous enough for that—can make any Government an impossibility which it does not choose to support, because it is not only two parties, perhaps not even three, but there is a great deal of cliqueism in colonial politics;[2] and while the Bond stands solid something less than half, or something more than a third, we will say, of the popular Chamber. The other parties are not, of course, all entirely in love with each other, and so any one of these parties, or any prominent politician leading by a clique, has to consider the Bond as absolutely master of the situation.

Mr. Schreiner went on to say that 'in January, 1896, if the High Commissioner's proclamation, as I fully believe, had not stopped the Johannesburg people from going out, there would have been a flame and flash of war from one end to the other of South Africa, in my view.' Asked how that would have affected the Dutch population of the Cape Colony, Mr. Schreiner replied:

They would have been in a very difficult position, and not for the first time. I believe their position would then have been, despite all those

[1] I call attention to this phrase 'loyalty to the Crown,' as we shall have abundant cause to see that it is quite distinct from loyalty to the Empire. Compare, too, my citations from *Die Patriot*.

[2] The meaning is more precise than the English.

matters, of which so much is made, which have occurred since 1881, the same as it was in 1881, a position of great difficulty. They are loyal and wish to be loyal, but blood bonds and sympathies exist between them and the burghers. Do not let us think of the Government, but only of the burghers of the two Republics; they are related by family ties right through. All those burghers in the Republics there have come from the old colony, and these bonds are so strong that I firmly believe that, in the event of such a contingency as Johannesburg really going out, and war there taking place, the position of a very large number of the Dutch in Cape Colony would have been exactly what it was in 1881.

What it was in 1881 we have already seen. Mr. Schreiner incidentally observed: 'I personally have no Dutch blood; I am a German and an Englishman; I have no Dutch descent; but, still, I should be called an Englishman there, and it is rather against me that I have not a little Dutch blood.' And he managed, quite unconsciously, to throw a great deal of light upon the attitude of the Dutch of Cape Colony towards the Imperial Government. In reply to a question from Mr. Wyndham (3782), he referred to the excitement caused by the Warren Expedition in 1885, which he described as a 'good illustration,' because,

strongly as that expedition as a matter of fact did do good work in colonial interests in preserving the trade route to the North, yet in many districts of the colony there was on the part of the Dutch an intensely hot feeling about it—I am telling you the facts as they are—a feeling of the greatest sympathy and antagonistic to their own material interests, because, of course, the trade route to the North was secured and kept open by the policy then followed in 1885. Yet the Dutch had a hot feeling about the Warren Expedition coming in from without to solve that South African difficulty. They always have the feeling, 'Let us solve our own difficulties on the spot.' It is not disloyalty that guides them to that, but they like to solve their own difficulties on the spot.

Now, it is difficult to understand how a very intelligent man, as Mr. Schreiner undoubtedly is, should have given such evidence, and reconciled it with the belief in Dutch loyalty. He admitted (3783) that 'the position of the South African Republic was wholly untenable.' The Republic, however, was a foreign State, and, according to Mr. Schreiner, the Cape Colony Dutch did not forfeit their claim to be considered loyal by resenting the action of the Imperial Government in threatening to drive the Transvaal Dutch from a position which, in his opinion, was wholly untenable. By what means the Imperial Government was ever to get the

Colonial Dutch to settle difficulties with the Transvaal Dutch, Mr. Schreiner apparently had no idea. Mr. Chamberlain (4162) questioned him thus: 'Supposing that diplomacy was exhausted, then I understand that you are in favour of enforcing these treaty obligations, and not allowing the Transvaal Government to "wriggle out of them," to use your own words.'

Mr. Schreiner: I said, I do not believe myself that the Dutch people of Cape Colony, if they could be got to understand the situation, would be on the side of saying, 'Allow the South African Republic either to evade or wriggle out of its true, properly-construed treaty obligations.' I quite adhere to that; but I put the qualification there, 'if they can be got to understand the situation,' and to that I also adhere.

Mr. Chamberlain: Do you mean to say that we could not count upon the loyalty of the Dutch colonists in the case of a breach of the Convention, if they did not understand the situation, and that you think it is possible they would not understand the situation?

Mr. Schreiner: I think blood is thicker than water on such occasions. They do not understand the reason why; they simply see that people known to themselves, and with whom they are closely associated, are being attacked, and in that event what happens? Human nature gives the answer: they do the same sort of thing that they did in 1881. They are put in a position of very great difficulty, and directly or indirectly they give very great assistance probably to those on the other side.

Mr. Schreiner supplemented this by saying (4166):

I cannot conceive of a case in which the colonial Dutch in the Cape Colony would not go with Her Majesty's Government, provided there had been, as I understand from you there would be, a fair approach by all diplomatic methods, and, if possible, a reference to arbitration, if there was a difference as to whether it was or was not a breach. If it was a patent breach, I think they would be very likely to go with you, because they feel strongly that good faith must be observed; but nice questions upon which lawyers may differ, and upon which lawyers do differ, forming the basis of an attack upon their kinsmen, would not lead them to say, 'Well, that lawyer thinks so, and therefore we think it is quite right that there should be an insistence upon the treaty in that respect.' But they would rather be inclined to say, 'A lawyer on the other side has advised our kinsmen, and tells them that it is not a breach,' and then their loyalty would stand a very severe strain indeed, if it did not break.

The history of the world records no single instance of a dispute about a legal document, in which there could not be found a lawyer on the other side to defend the most untenable position; and so long as such a lawyer was to be found in the world to advise the South African Republic that they had a case as against the Imperial Government, so long, on

Mr. Schreiner's showing, would the loyalty of the Cape Dutch be strained to breaking-point, if the Imperial Government sought to enforce its rights. This admission is really a far worse imputation upon the loyalty of the Cape Dutch than anything which can be extracted from the historic speech of Lord Milner at Graaf Reinet on March 3, 1898.

And while it is quite clear from Mr. Schreiner's evidence that the Cape Colony Dutch would always have resented the enforcement by arms of the Conventions between Great Britain and the South African Republic, it is also clear that they were averse from putting moral pressure upon the Republic to secure the removal of legitimate grounds for complaint. Thus, speaking of the Bond (4370):

> They are very careful there, if I may say so, not to do what one is now compelled to do here—provide remedies for South Africa Republican grievances. The Bond always puts that on one side, as may be seen from its recent Congress. They do not even want to go and confer, because that would lead to a discussion of the concerns of the sister Republic. They do not like much that is done, but they do not like to provide an external suggestion of remedy. That is their view. They say, 'This is your house; manage your house in your own way. We should like you to alter;' but they would not suggest the way it should be altered. They would not do that in Parliament, when Mr. Innes' very reasonably worded proposal came forward expressing a desire for the redress of the grievances. It was felt by the large majority, that majority including myself, to be undesirable, not because we did not recognise the grievances, but because we did not think we should do any good by recording a resolution of Parliament to that effect; we did not think we should further the object we had in view if we were to record such a resolution.

And he added (4385):

> Holding the view I do that they (the Transvaal) will not be helped in the direction that we desire to see them move internally, even by the kindest expression from without. That was, as I put it, why our Parliament did not adopt even so purely lustreless a resolution as Mr. Innes propounded as an addendum to my resolution of 1896. We would not adopt it because we did feel, by a very large majority of the colonial Parliament, that we should leave them to clean their streets in the way the streets of Jerusalem were kept clean.
>
> Mr. Chamberlain: I suppose your view is that the Imperial Government should adopt the same policy as the Cape Government, and should refrain from even friendly representations as not being calculated to advance the cause of the Uitlanders.
>
> Mr. Schreiner: Yes, decidedly, so far as purely internal concerns are concerned.

Mr. Schreiner habitually encumbers his opinions with so luxuriant a growth of verbiage that at times he seems unable

to discern their drift. From these passages, however, it is clear that he is defending, not only an untenable, but an impossible, position. Let us illustrate, as he himself would say. The position of the South African Republic was that of a self-contained flat in a building comprising other self-contained flats, over which the general landlord had authority limited by the leases of his respective tenants. The occupant of what may be called the Transvaal flat was in the habit of so treating his heating apparatus as to threaten the destruction by fire of not only his own enclave, but those of his neighbours, and the whole property of the general landlord. Now, according to Mr. Schreiner, the said neighbours would resent any interference on the landlord's part with the control, however dangerous to the common interests, of this particular flat, and would also think it indelicate even to suggest to their co-tenant that he should take precautions against involving their property and the landlord's in destruction by fire. How, then, in the name of common-sense, to avoid a general conflagration if the occupant of the Transvaal flat persisted in playing with fire? This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of Mr. Schreiner's defence of the policy of the Afrikander Bond.

I have cited Mr. Schreiner's evidence first because it has been my object to frame my case as much as possible from the other side. We have, however, much stronger proof of the Bond's true character—proof dating from a time anterior to the discovery of gold in the Rand—proof, therefore, which could not have been manufactured by, or in the interests of, unscrupulous capitalists. Let us first take the programme of the Bond after its purification and regeneration by Mr. Hofmeyer:

PROGRAMME OF PRINCIPLES OF THE AFRIKANDER NATIONAL PARTY.

I. The Afrikander National Party acknowledges the guidance of Providence, also in the destiny of countries and nations.

II. Its aim is to form, under the guidance of Providence, a pure nationality, and to prepare our countrymen to establish a 'United South Africa.'[1]

[1] Originally these words were followed by 'under its own flag.' They were deleted at the instigation of Mr. Hofmeyr, not altogether to the satisfaction of the more extreme members of the Bond, as we may gather from a meeting of the

III. To gain this object, it considers it necessary (*a*) to acquire a firm union of the different European nationalities in South Africa, and (*b*) to promote the self-dependence of South Africa.

IV. It considers that the union referred to in Clause III. (*a*) should rest on a clear and plain conception of each other's common interests in politics, agriculture, stock-breeding, commerce, and industry, and on the acknowledgment of each other's peculiar rights regarding religion, education, and language, so that all jealousy between the different national elements of our countrymen be removed, and place be made for a palpable South African feeling.

V. To promote the independence, Clause III. (*b*), it expects (*a*) that the feeling of national self-respect and of patriotism towards South Africa shall be developed and cherished in schools, families, and by medium of the press; (*b*) that an election system be applied, by which not only the rights of number, but also of property and intellect, be acknowledged, and to guard as much as possible against bribery and coercion at elections; (*c*) that our agriculture, stock-breeding, commerce, and trade be supported by all lawful means, as, for instance, by an efficient Masters' and Servants' Act, and by a circumspect and judicially applied system of protection; (*d*) that the South African colonies and States regulate their native questions themselves either separately or by mutual agreement, thereby developing the active forces of the country by means of efficient

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Bond held at Graaf Reinet on March 24, 1884, reported by the *Graaf Reinet Advertiser* of that date. Mr. Viljoen said they 'were building without a foundation. There had been war in the Transvaal on account of the British flag, and now they were speaking of confederation under the British flag. He himself was against the British flag.' Mr. Wentzel said, 'The flag question could be dealt with afterwards, but there must be a united flag, England engaging to protect the sea-coast of South Africa.' Mr. Theron, who is now (1902) Acting Chairman of the Bond, said as to the flag, 'that he would leave to the Government of the States; the Bond's motto was, "Unity is strength," therefore every Bondsman must desire to see the unification of South Africa.' At the same meeting Mr. N. F. de Waal, at the present moment the astute and active Secretary of the Bond, opposed the words in the programme that stated there should be a united South Africa under its own flag, saying:

'If America had gone on in this way instead of first combining all her citizens, she would not be to-day what she is. Their work was a work of diplomacy; there were Afrikanders, Dutch, and Germans, a lot of people who would not accept this programme; it was the duty of the Bond to win these men over to their cause, and not to alienate them.'

In answer to Mr. Du Plessis, who said that the words 'under its own flag' were an encouragement, and something to be looked forward to, Mr. de Waal significantly said, 'That will come of itself,' and about the same time or a little earlier (February 4. 1884) there appeared in the *Kimberley Advertiser* a letter signed by 'One who Knows' (who, I am permitted to say, was Mr. Basil Worsfold, the historian of South Africa), in which he said:

'The Afrikander Bond (or Hofmeyr's) policy is not so well known, and is therefore deserving of notice. From certain letters written by very influential members of the Bond to their brethren in Stellaland and elsewhere, it appears they are determined by hook or by crook to prevent any annexation of Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony. They argue that the Imperial Government will then finally be obliged to hand over the country to the Transvaal. The latter will then federate with the Orange Free State, and the combined Republics attack the Cape Colony. The Dutch element residing in the latter will receive the invaders with open arms, and assist them to drive the Engleschman into the sea. Then Vereenigdzuid Afrika is called into existence as the great independent State of South Africa, and the millennium commences.'

civil laws; and (*e*) that foreign intervention with the local concerns in South Africa be guarded against.

VI. While acknowledging the Governments existing in South Africa, and intending to fulfil its obligations towards them faithfully, it considers that it is likewise the duty of those Governments to promote the interests of South Africa in accordance with the foregoing clauses, and while it guards on the one hand against unnecessary or rash interferences with the domestic and private affairs of the burgher, against all direct interference with the religious development of the nation, and against enactments which might impede the unfettered influence of the Gospel on our countrymen, and on the other hand to discharge all the direct duties of a good Government, under which may be classed: (*a*) Taking into account in all its general doings the Christian character of the people; (*b*) maintaining the freedom of religion for every one as long as the public order and honour are not injured; (*c*) acknowledging and carrying out the religious, social, and bodily wants of the people for the existing weekly day of rest;[1] (*d*) the application of an equal judicious tax system; (*e*) to bring into operation an impartial and as much as practically an inexpensive efficient administration of justice; and (*f*) to guard the public honour, and to watch against the adulteration of bread-stuffs and the pollution of soil, air, or water, as well as against the spreading of contagious diseases.

VII. To enable these principles to gain a footing, the Afrikander National Party comes forward as a self-dependent party, and enters into co-operation with other parties only when it can do so without the violation of its principles.

GENERAL CONSTITUTION OF THE BOND.

ART. I.—The Afrikander Bond establishes itself in the various States and colonies in South Africa.

ART. II.—The chief object of the Bond is the forming of a South African nationality by union and co-operation, as a means to the object in view—a united South Africa. This object the Bond endeavours to gain by constitutional means, giving all support to the respective Governments and Legislations, and respecting the rights of each.

ART. III.—Anyone may become a member[2] who in a proper way and by signing the following schedule declares that he will maintain the declared principles and observe the duties of the same.

The schedules deal merely with administrative and electioneering functions.

Now, we learn from so excellent an authority as Mr. Merriman what were the Bond's real character and object. The speech from which I am about to quote[3] was delivered in

[1] Mr. Cronwright Schreiner, in his anti-Bond days, jeeringly referred to the efforts of the Transvaal to arrest the Johannesburg Express at midnight on Saturday in the midst of the Karoo.

[2] In a debate in the session of 1900, Mr. N. F. de Waal imprudently allowed the remark to escape him that it was never contemplated to admit 'rank outsiders'—*i.e.*, Englishmen.

[3] Bell, 'The South African Conspiracy,' p. 57.

1885 at Graham's Town long after the so-called regeneration of the Bond.

The situation (he said) is a grave one. It is not a question of localism, it is not a question of party politics; but it is a question whether the Cape Colony is to continue to be an integral part of the British Empire. The question is, whether we intend to progress along the lines of freedom, or whether we are ready to take the Transvaal for a model, and have our policy shaped by the Afrikander Bond. . . . You will have to keep public men up to the mark, and each one of you will have to make up his mind whether he is prepared to see this colony remain a part of the British Empire, which carries with it obligations as well as privileges, or whether he is prepared to obey the dictates of the Bond. From the very first time, some years ago, when the poison began to be instilled into the country, I felt that it must come to this: WAS ENGLAND OR THE TRANSVAAL TO BE THE PARAMOUNT FORCE IN SOUTH AFRICA? From the time the Convention was signed the policy of the Transvaal was to push out bands of freebooters, and to get them involved in quarrels with the natives. They wished to push their border westwards and realize the dream of President Pretorius, which was that the Transvaal should stretch from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. . . . All this time this people (the Boers) had the most arrogant disregard of the British Government. Nobody regrets this more than I do. I was one of those who thought that the British Government had been magnanimous in terminating the Transvaal War. How have they repaid the magnanimity of Great Britain? They have done everything to flaunt, insult and annoy the British Government. Every right-thinking colonist, whether Dutch or English, must have a feeling of shame at that conduct. . . . Perhaps you think I am saying too much about the Bond, but from the very time when, four years ago, the movement was set on foot, I declared hostility to it. I said it would make people have different sides and places, one colonist who was a Dutchman in opposition to another colonist who was an Englishman. Nothing could be more disastrous. Since then that institution has made a show of loyalty while it stirred up disloyalty. . . . Some people who should have known better were dragged into the toils under the idea that they could influence it for good, but the whole teaching of history went to show that *when the conflict was between men of extreme views and moderate men, the violent section triumphed.* And so we see that some moderate men are in the power of an institution whose avowed object is to combat the British Government. In any other country such an organization could not have grown, but here, among a scattered population, it had insidiously and successfully worked. What could they think of the objects of that Bond, when they found Judge Reitz[1] advocating a Republic of South Africa under one flag? . . . My quarrel with the Bond is that it stirred up race differences. Its main object is to make the South African Republic the paramount Power in South Africa. That is the reason of its hostility to John Brand—John Brand, the Afrikander of Afrikanders, a true friend to the English, and one who has governed his State, and is jealous of all its privileges. He is as much opposed to the Bond as I am, and the Bond is as much opposed to him. . . . Our connection with England carries its responsibilities as well as its privileges, and I hope I have pressed upon the meeting the necessity there is that the colony act in concert with the Imperial Government. . . . The great question is, whether you wish to remain an integral part of the

[1] Late State Secretary, South African Republic.

British Empire. Do you want to have another flag here, a German flag, or a flag of united South Africa? Of course you say 'No,' but if you want to keep the British flag, you must act in concert with the mother-country. Sacrifices have to be made in this matter, and all of us must make sacrifices. There can be no faction in this matter; it is far too serious. . . . I appeal to you to show your hatred and detestation of the Bond and its abettors, and to show yourselves desirous of remaining a part of that nationality devoted to law and order. Do you wish to be members of an imaginary South African Republic, or to continue citizens of a colony under the tutelage of a Power under whom every man is regarded as equal before the law, and whose reign is the reign of freedom and order?

The reference to Sir John Brand is to a letter addressed by him to a number of Bondsmen who bade him welcome to Smithfield on one of his presidential visits. It is dated October 22, 1881, and runs as follows:[1]

Gentlemen,—I would like to repeat in writing what I said verbally, and tender my gratitude to you for the hearty welcome with which I was received at such a distance from Smithfield, and make known my objections to the propriety or suitableness of the Afrikander Bond.

It was agreeable to me to once more meet you all in health, among whom I have so many old friends and acquaintances; but it was not gratifying to me that you in your salutation of welcome placed the Afrikander Bond so prominently in the foreground. However, since this has occurred, I may not now pass it over in silence, but exercise my duty in warning you against the dangers which I see beforehand, in order that the seeds of dissension may not be sown where unity should exist. I am a thorough Afrikander. My career demonstrates that I love the Free State, and that I have endeavoured to promote its interests. You are Free Staters and inhabitants of South Africa. Poets of all nations have ever sung of patriotism. Rightly says Vondel, 'Love of his country is inborn in every one'; therefore it is not necessary for you nor for me to be members of the Afrikander Bond to show our love for our native land. Have you not—have not all the inhabitants of the Orange Free State—proved during the troublous times of the war in 1865-66 that you were bound together in soul and spirit to fight for and to vindicate our rights?

To foster and promote that harmony, that hearty co-operation and friendly relationship among the inhabitants of the Free State and the whole of South Africa must be our earnest endeavour. This can only be done by drawing closer the bonds of love between one another, and this we can only accomplish by giving offence to no one and respecting the feelings of each one as we would that others would do unto us; by every one in his own sphere doing his best to promote the welfare and prosperity of the Orange Free State, and thereby also of the whole of South Africa, and by strengthening and confirming the most amicable relations with the Governments and inhabitants of the neighbouring colonies. If you consider any amendment in this or that matter necessary in the Free State, use then the means which for that purpose are afforded by the Constitution. Your representative will support your wishes in the honourable the Volksraad in the same way as he has hitherto done, and earnestly strive to do what is best for the country and its inhabitants.

[1] Bell, 'The South African Conspiracy,' p. 33.

But, as your friend, I must tell you plainly that I entertain grave doubts whether the path which the Afrikander Bond has adopted is calculated to lead to that unity and fraternization which is so indispensable for the bright future of South Africa.

According to my conception, the Constitution of the Afrikander Bond appears desirous of exalting itself above the established Government, and of forming an *imperium in imperio.*

Wishing you and yours, Smithfield, and the district of Caledon River, God's blessing, and a large measure of welfare and prosperity, and tendering you all my sincere thanks for your hearty welcome and your friendly disposition and good wishes for me,

I remain,

Your sincere, well-wishing friend and servant,

(Signed) J. H. BRAND.

Mr. Merriman was by no means alone in his view of the real objects of the Afrikander Bond, even after its regeneration by Mr. Hofmeyr. On March 28, 1884, there appeared an article from the pen of Mr. Basil Worsfold, who was at that time a Professor in the University of Cape Town.[1] It excited considerable attention at the time, and was generally known as the 'camel article.' It ran as follows:

There is a certain Eastern story which tells us of an idle man who was roused from his slumbers by the apparition of a camel's head in the entrance of his tent. On his objecting, the crafty animal replied by apologizing for his intrusion with much humility, and begging that he might be allowed merely to warm the end of his nose. The request was granted, and the owner of the tent gave himself once more to sleep. But his repose was soon broken; this time not only the ugly head, but the shoulders, of the camel were within the doorway. Exclaiming that this was really too insolent, he jumped up and commenced to belabour the animal. But his activity was too late: one more shove, and the beast was altogether inside the tent, and then proceeded first to kick out its unfortunate owner, and afterwards to lie down in well-earned repose. We cannot help recognising in this story an illustration of what is happening to-day. The idle man is the loyal colonist, the camel is the supremacy of anti-English prejudice in South Africa, and the camel's head is the Afrikander Bond. Whether the analogy is to be carried further remains to be seen; for our part, we trust that the colonists will not be guilty of any such fatal inactivity. However this may be, we cannot forget that it is our high duty to warn the people of the Cape against allowing so fatal a visitor as the Afrikander Bond to make its way among them. The proceedings of the provincial Bestuor at Graaf Reinet, with their elaborate mask of loyalty to the British Crown, have happily left no doubt as to the ultimate aims of the Bond. Nor is it in any sense an adequate reply to the charge of Mr. Ross to appeal, as Mr. Hofmeyr did, to the Constitution of the Bond. That society, like other societies, must be satisfied to be judged by the opinions and acts of its members. 'By their fruits ye shall know them' is now no less the ultimate test of the excellence of an individual or society than it was 2,000 years ago. A society in whose meetings it is necessary for

[1] It appeared anonymously.

deliberate condemnation to be passed on the expression of such a sentiment as 'United South Africa under its own flag,' and of terms such as 'fortune-seekers,' applied to what might not unreasonably be supposed to be not the least useful class in a young community, and 'vanquished English,' can hardly expect to escape a suspicion of disloyalty. Nor must the Bond, after the plain intimations it has given of a desire to interfere with those who are not willing to submit to its dictates, be angry if a tendency to tyranny is discovered in its principles. And here a word of warning: If ever the Bond grow sufficiently formidable to commence a career of unconstitutional and illegal influence, it will not be the English colonists who will suffer, but those colonists of Dutch extraction who can see that the best interests of South Africa are not to be secured by obedience to the Bond, and who are manly enough to avow their opinions. The English colonist will be protected partly by his direct connection with the Government, and partly from the fact that he is generally to be found in towns; but the inhabitants of the small towns and villages of the interior will have occasion bitterly to rue the day when the Bond is strong enough to imitate the Land League. No, let all our fellow-colonists, of whatever blood they may be, if only they care ever so little to preserve a constitutional Government, free from the deadly influence of a political Hydra which combines the exclusiveness of the Caucus and the ignorance and violence of the Irish Land League, boldly declare war upon the Bond. In so doing, by jealously protecting their opinion of freedom and action—political, social, religious—they will be laying the foundation of the future greatness of united South Africa.

About this time Sir Charles Warren wrote a letter to the *Times* (August 12, 1884):

Only those who thoroughly know the mingled qualities of the Boer character can realize the pitiful contempt in which the English nation is now held in South Africa due to the vacillating and servile policy pursued during the past six years. Fortunately, the ancient spirit of our race, which seems to have departed for awhile from our councils, is yet shining forth in individuals, and the Boers are aware that our spirit has not entirely left us, and are restrained for the present from going to the extremes which they seriously contemplate in the future. The state of tension, however, cannot continue without danger to the community; our colonists are becoming disgusted with the conduct of affairs, and the death of a man like Mr. Bethell[1] must embitter the feelings of hundreds of

[1] The *Kimberley Independent* stated at the time of his death: 'We heard a few days since that he had met his death in a skirmish between the (Boer) filibusters and natives. This is now confirmed, and from the particulars at hand it appears that he was shot in cold blood—murdered, in fact. He fell into the hands of two Boers, and these were Boers who, in common with their confederates, hated him for his brave name and love of fair-play without distinction of race or colour. When the Boer barbarians got hold of him, they asked him what they should do with him. Undaunted to the last, he told them to do what they pleased, and the savages—for they were no better than savages—shot him dead, his brains out.'

Mr. Assistant-Commissioner Wright furnished Commander Bethell, R.N., with an account of the murder of his brother on July 30, 1884. Mr. Wright's letter is dated September 15: 'On the 30th July last, your brother, in company with the Baralong (Montsioa's people), left Mafeking with the intention of intercepting a party of the free-booters who had made a raid upon the cattle posts of

others who, in the old colony, Natal, and the Free State, are holding to their own against heavy odds.

And in one English Journal, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the purpose of the Bond was thoroughly understood. Thus an article headed 'Our Relations with the Cape Colony' (September 18, 1884):

Secure in the support of a Ministry dependent on the Dutch vote, the filibusters will push forward merrily the work of confiscation under the shadow of the British flag. But if the Cape Colony is to be governed on Dutch principles, and the Cape Ministry is to depend for its existence on the Dutch vote, how long will South Africa remain English? It may be too strong a thing to say, that the logical sequel . . . is the limitation of British sovereignty in South Africa to a coaling-station in Table Bay. But what else are we coming to when a Cape Government hauls down the British flag before Dutch filibusters in Goshen, and hoists it in Stellaland to cover and to condone the misdeeds of the new fellow-colonists, whose votes will help still further to swell the Dutch majority in the Cape Parliament?

The attitude of the more moderate Dutch is displayed in a remarkable article which appeared in the *Cape Times* of

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Montsioa and Gassitsive. The Boers were much nearer than they imagined, and the result was that the contending parties met in open country, not above four miles from the town, at about two o'clock in the afternoon. In the early part of the fight, the Boers in charge of the cattle were driven back, but a large reinforcement came, and, turning the Baralong flank, cut them up severely Your brother was then standing by the side of Israel Molema, a petty chief. They, seeing that their only chance for life was to mount their horses and fly, attempted to do so, when Israel's horse was shot, he himself a second later receiving a bullet through the shoulder. Your brother then attempted to lift Israel on his own horse, intending to jump on behind. He, however, failed to do so, as Israel was utterly unable to help himself. Israel urged your brother to leave him; he, however, most nobly refused to do so. Mr. Bethell then was struck by a bullet which, entering a little to the left of the bridge of the nose, went out in front of the left ear, forcing out his eye and breaking his jaw-bone in its passage. He fell to the ground, and at that moment his horse ran away. Whilst he was on the ground, one Harrington, an Englishman, with one of the freebooters, rode up to him and said: "Oh, you are Bethell. Do you remember saying to me at Kimberley that I should never get land here? How is it now?" Your brother said: "Do not shoot me; you see I am badly wounded. I surrender as your prisoner. Take me to the camp." Harrington replied: "I won't, but I cannot say that the Boers won't." Then two of the Boers, one named Van Rooyen and another whose name I am unable to ascertain, came up and said: "So you are Bethell; shall we shoot you?" Your poor brother, seeing no hope for him, said in despair: "Shoot if you like." After some further talk, or rather, I should say, after some taunts, they both shot him, both shots passing through his forehead, and as a matter of course killing him instantly. That night Israel, who, feigning death, had heard all that had taken place, made his way to the station, and, sending for me, gave me the above particulars. That is, he told me the manner of his death and the conversation that preceded it. I have obtained the names from Boer sources as well as corroboration of the manner of his murder. It is not hidden away. His murderers exult in the deed.'

October 23, 1884, by one Jan Bergenar, a Dutch Afrikander and a son of a farmer:

We must guard against 'slimness' in our politics, just as in our business transactions. We all know what slimness does in commerce, robs and discourages the farmer who produces, and the buyer in England, who is brought face to face with the results of this fatal quality. In politics our 'slim' people propose to themselves the following problem: Inasmuch as the connection with England is necessary and beneficial, what is the least possible amount of adherence which we can dole out, and for which we expect to receive such vital advantages? How can England be out of South Africa—so far as having a voice in our affairs is concerned—and yet be in South Africa and over it, conferring upon us the inestimable boon of the Imperial connection? How shall we 'eliminate the Imperial factor' and yet retain it? This disgusting slimness, not confined to people of one language, has cost us much in loss of character in Europe, and might have cost us more; but possibly that evil has been arrested by more recent expressions of loyalty and attachment.

Mr. Theophilus Schreiner also has placed on record his recollections of an interview with Mr. Reitz, one of the founders of the Bond. In a letter to the *Cape Times*, November 6, 1899:

I met Mr. Reitz, then a Judge of the Orange Free State, in Bloemfontein between seventeen and eighteen years ago (that is, 1881-82), shortly after the retrocession of the Transvaal, and when he was busy establishing the Afrikander Bond. It must be patent to everyone that at that time, at all events, England and its Government had no intention of taking away the independence of the Transvaal, for she had just 'magnanimously' granted the same; no intention of making war on the Republics, for she had just made peace; no intention to seize the Rand goldfields, for they were not yet discovered. At that time, when I met Mr. Reitz, he did his best to get me to become a member of the Afrikander Bond; but after studying its constitution and programme I refused to do so. Whereupon the following colloquy in substance took place between us, which has been indelibly imprinted upon my mind ever since:

Mr. Reitz: Why do you refuse? Is the object of getting the people to take an interest in political matters not a good one?

Myself: Yes, it is; but I seem to see plainly here, between the lines of this Constitution, much more ultimately aimed at than that.

Mr. Reitz: What?

Myself: I see quite clearly that the ultimate object aimed at is the overthrow of the British power and the expulsion of the British flag from South Africa.

Mr. Reitz (*with his pleasant, conscious smile, as one whose secret thought and purpose have been discovered, and who was not altogether displeased that such was the case*): Well, what if it is so?

Myself: You don't suppose, do you, that that flag is going to disappear from South Africa without a tremendous struggle and fight?

Mr. Reitz (*with the same pleasant, self-conscious, self-satisfied, and yet semi-apologetic, smile*): Well, I suppose not. But even so, what of that?

Myself: Only this: that when that struggle takes place, you and I

will be on opposite sides; and, what is more, the God who was on the side of the Transvaal in the late war because it had right on its side will be on the side of England, because He must view with abhorrence any plotting and scheming to overthrow her power and position in South Africa, which have been ordained by Him.

Mr. Reitz: We will see.

The method by which such allegations are met by the English pro-Boers has the merit of simplicity. They assert, *sans phrase*, that their author is a liar. It is, of course, impossible to argue with persons who use this kind of weapon, but a confirmation of the accuracy of Mr. Schreiner's recollection of his interview with Mr. Reitz is supplied by no less an authority than Mr. Reitz himself in his 'Century of Wrong,' an appeal to Afrikanders on the outbreak of the war:

BROTHER AFRIKANDERS,

Once more in the annals of our blood-stained history has the day dawned when we are forced to grasp our weapons in order to resume the struggle for liberty and existence, entrusting our national cause to that Providence which has guided our people throughout South Africa in such a miraculous way.

The struggle of now nearly a century, which began when a foreign rule was forced upon the people of the Cape of Good Hope, hastens to an end; we are approaching the last act in that great drama which is so momentous for all South Africa; we have reached the stage when it will be decided whether the sacrifices, which both our fathers and we ourselves have made in the cause of freedom, have been offered in vain—whether the blood of our race, with which every part of South Africa had been, as it were, consecrated, has been shed in vain, and whether by the grace of God the last stone will now be built into the edifice which our fathers began with so much toil and so much sorrow.

The hour has struck which will decide whether South Africa, in jealously guarding its liberty, will enter upon a new phase of its history, or whether our existence as a people will come to an end; whether we shall be exterminated in the deadly struggle for that liberty which we have prized above all earthly treasures, and whether South Africa will be dominated by capitalists without conscience, acting in the name and under the protection of an unjust and hated Government 7,000 miles away from here.

He concludes in these terms:

May the hope which glowed in our hearts during 1880, and which buoyed us up during that struggle, burn on steadily. May it prove a stream of light in our path, invincibly moving onwards through blood and through tears until it leads us to the real union of South Africa.

As in 1880, we now submit our cause with perfect confidence to the whole world. Whether the result be victory or death, liberty will assuredly rise in South Africa like a sun from out of the mist of the morning, just as freedom dawned over the United States of America a little more than a century ago. Then from the Zambesi to Simons Bay it will be—

AFRICA FOR THE AFRIKANDERS.

In the years which intervened between the retrocession and the discovery of gold, there was little to attract the traveller to South Africa, and the consequence is that during all that time we have little testimony from independent observers. There is, however, a long, gossiping work by Mr. John Stanley Little, which covers a great part of it, and the superficial character of this book is, for our immediate purpose, a recommendation. Mr. Little did not probe very deeply. He rather reflects the opinions of those with whom he was brought in contact than gives expression to any which he had taken pains to form himself, and in the preface to his second edition (1887) he delivers himself thus:

> Let me briefly state, then, what are the issues before us in the determination of the destiny of our South African dominions. Are we to frankly accept our responsibilities there, or are we to reject them? . . . Having put our hand to the plough, are we going to turn back? If we do, *this* will result: British and philo-British colonists of South Africa, finding themselves first maligned and then deserted by their Government, and discovering themselves shut off from the north—their land of promise—by a Boer cordon, will make common cause with the malcontented Dutch all over South Africa. This marriage will eventuate in a Boer-Afrikander Republic—the United States of South Africa. The days of this Republic, if established, would be short indeed. So soon as the English and progressive elements in its constitution had sated of their dearly-bought vengeance upon England, they would face towards the Dutch, and internecine strife would devastate South Africa.

In the few quotations I give from this book, my object is to show that, mixing with men in clubs and at hotels, the globe-trotter could not help realizing the issues in process of development. Thus:[1]

> Concerning the Transvaal, it has no Government worthy of the name. The Triumvirate rules supremely so far as that goes; but, as a matter of fact, each man doeth as seemeth best in his own eyes—pays taxes when he likes, goes out to fight or stays at home as he may feel disposed. These South African Republics are the curse of South African progress, for wheresoe'er her feet would tread, they lie before her. Their inhabitants unsettle public opinion, and foster ill-will towards England. England must go round them, and thus swamp them, if she will not go through them. Anyhow, they cannot be allowed to thwart her manifest destiny. The smouldering passions of the Boers, made more pronounced by their success, have influenced the whole tenor of Dutch feeling in South Africa towards us. The Dutch have set their faces directly against progress, and the only thing the progressive Afrikander can do is to ignore the Dutch.

[1] 'South Africa: a Sketch Book,' by J. Stanley Little, p. 307.

This is entirely true of South Africa before the Rand. We get another sidelight later on :[1]

The jealousy between the Eastern and Western Provinces, the mutual antagonism of the English and Dutch, and the very existence of the Dutch Republics, all add to the complexity of this terribly difficult confederation problem. Then Mr. Hofmeyr and the Afrikander Bond must be reckoned with. The Bond desires to set up the United States of South Africa, and cut the Imperial connection altogether.

Again :

Our withdrawal from the Transvaal,[2] by which the English and progressive section of the population of that State are left under the dominance of narrow and bigoted Boers, has ruined that fair land financially, while it has rendered the Englishman's life so intolerable, not only there, but in all places where the Dutch element is in the ascendant, that he cannot hold his head up with the wonted pride and reliance of his race. The Afrikander Bond, which aims at the expulsion of the English, or at least at the absorption and elimination of English characteristics, has gained immeasurably from the folly of our policy across the Vaal. Such is the disgust of even patriotic and loyal colonists to England, that any combination hurtful to the Imperial connection may hope to gain adherents from those very sources where until recently it would have met with its bitterest and most uncompromising foes.

In the appendix Mr. Little writes :[3]

I will allude to the moral effect which the withdrawal (from the Transvaal) has had in South Africa itself. England is now regarded as a defeated Power all over the Continent, and the position of the English and Dutch is reversed. All those sneers and personalities with which ill-bred Englishmen were wont to taunt Dutchmen are now our portion, and will be our heritage. . . . Formerly the Dutch believed in the invincibility of England, and in her determination to maintain her hold upon her possessions. This feeling has been rudely shaken, and, to our incalculable injury, we are no longer considered impervious by the Dutch or by the natives. The natives again cherish hopes of turning us out of the country, and the Dutch, who, as I have before remarked, were losing all idea or desire of remaining a separate nation, have now revived all their nearly forgotten hopes of becoming the dominant race in Africa and shaking off the English yoke. . . .

The after-effects (of the retrocession) have been worse than the greatest enemies of the movement could have feared. It has extinguished for many a long day all hope of union and consolidation among the South African States. It has given the Boers a supremacy all through South Africa, and, as I sometimes fear, laid the foundation-stone of the United States of South Africa. . . .

The (Transvaal) Boers desire to annex all territory to their north, east, and west. The south would inevitably follow, so that instead of Cape Colony being the central Power in South Africa, the South African Republic would usurp its place. The Transvaalers hope to turn the deep

[1] 'South Africa: a Sketch Book,' by J. Stanley Little, p. 344.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 358. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

disgust and dissatisfaction—nay, disaffection—of the English in South Africa into the open renunciation of the English yoke; that is the game Messrs. Kruger and Company are playing. Let me counsel my readers not to imagine that I am taking an extreme view of the situation. The temptation to belong to another nation is becoming a very strong temptation to all South Africans — English, Colonial, Dutch, Boer, Afrikander, or native. . . . President Kruger, at a recent banquet, boldly advocated this policy. The Afrikander Bond, which, I fear, will be largely represented in the new Cape Parliament, means nothing more nor less. President Kruger and his colleagues' speeches all breath one sentiment—advocacy of the United South African Republic. Not a word is heard about England's place in South Africa, nor the suzerainty of the Queen. The cry at the Paarl and at Cape Town, no less than at Kimberley, was pitched in one key—a very seditious key, I take it—'Africa for the Afrikanders.' These Boers have been allowed to preach disloyalty and sedition to English subjects throughout British South Africa. Our policy has inspired such burning disgust in the colonies, who are beginning to despair of substantial help or support from England, that I fear a spirit of semi-acquiescence with the Boer propaganda is stealing over the minds of all classes of colonial society. I have been a close student of the Cape and Natal journals for many years, and I note, with sorrow and grave apprehension of coming evil, the gradual change which has taken place in their tone and opinions. At one time they were almost unanimous in the loyalty of expression which pervaded their general tendencies. Now they seem to be wavering; some are even openly joining issue with the ultra-Boers, and this is more especially true of Natal.

And he quotes (p. 484) from the *Natal Mercury:*

Before long England will awake to find that another campaign has begun in South Africa, the cause of which she does not comprehend, the end of which she cannot foresee, the result of which is problematical.

My apology for labouring this point, and for piling proof upon proof of the spirit of disloyalty to England at this period, is that only so can the foolish charge that this war was the result of the Raid, or the work of capitalists, be effectively refuted. In this complicated and mysterious universe there are few things which can be asserted with absolute certainty. There is, however, one: whatever else be doubtful, it is inconceivable that an effect should precede its cause. All the evidence I have collected (I have given very much less than a tithe of it) refers to a period not only anterior to the Raid, but long before the wealth of the Rand had been suspected, much less exploited. From one end of the sub-continent to the other the effects of Majubanimity, which had not yet seen its final development, were so evident as to strike the most casual observer. The vision of a United South African Republic free from British domination

was, no doubt, like those aspirations of the schoolroom which were to be realized 'when our ship comes home.' The ship of the Transvaal came in with the discovery of the practically inexhaustible wealth of the Witwatersrand. Hitherto the aspirations of the Dutch Afrikander had been of the nature of a dream. The machinery was there, but the driving-power was wanting. They felt that it was sorely hampered by the Convention, which placed them in a position of dependence upon Great Britain. And in the year 1883 Lord Derby ruled in Downing Street in succession to Lord Kimberley, who had moved to the Foreign Office on Lord Granville's death.

Now, at all times the Transvaal Government has shown an astonishing familiarity with the drift of public opinion in England, and with the character of the statesmen with whom they have had to deal. Lord Derby's record was a curious one, and there was a certain irony in the fact that he should be the head of the great family whose motto is 'Sans changer.' His early career was devoted to the Conservative party in the House of Commons under the leadership of his father and Mr. Disraeli. But, being nominally a Conservative, he had always leaned towards Liberalism, and his inclusion in Mr. Disraeli's Ministry of 1874 was in some respects accountable for the unexpected disaster in which it was whelmed. His resignation during the Russo-Turkish War hurt both his party and his country. He had not, in his public utterances, shown any desire to abandon the traditional policy of Great Britain with regard to the Near East. It was only when strong measures in its interest grew necessary that he lost his nerve. Of all the statesmen who presided at the Foreign Office during the reign of Queen Victoria, it may be said of Lord Derby more truly than of any other that he handled the sceptre of Empire as if it burned his fingers, and before the elections of 1880 he had gone over, body, soul, and purse, to the Liberals.[1] A weak, timid, and nervous man, with a certain business capacity, he might have won credit as a Foreign Minister in a period of general tranquillity; but his passion for turning difficulties

[1] He was destined to abandon them also when Mr. Gladstone proposed Home Rule.

rather than meeting them was well known to the Boers, and they determined to trade upon it. Then, as at some other critical points in our South African history, the hands of the Government were full of business which seemed more important and more exciting. The conduct, therefore, of our relations with the Transvaal was left entirely to Lord Derby, and it is said that his colleagues knew nothing of the concession which he made to the Boers till it had passed into history. Be this as it may, it is certain that in the November of 1883 there came to London a deputation, consisting of Mr. Kruger, Mr. S. J. Du Toit (a father founder of the Bond), and Mr. N. J. Smit, whose purpose was the abrogation of the Convention of 1881 and the substitution of 'a new arrangement.' Written at the Albemarle Hotel, London, and bearing date November 14, 1883, the memorial to Lord Derby states the object in view with unusual frankness:

> The deputation consider it their duty to urge this with the more earnestness because Her Majesty's Government would entirely mistake the feelings of our people should they suppose that either the present or the coming generation can ever rest in satisfaction unless the Sand River Convention be again recognised as the historical basis of the new arrangement. The just conviction that this treaty still continues to have its binding force upon the British Government as well as upon our own can never be abandoned by our people, not only because the said treaty is the reward of incredible sacrifices, but also because our people would continue to feel themselves menaced by the proximity of Her Majesty's power in South Africa, as long as the opinion can take root that a treaty concluded in the most solemn manner and in due form[1] can no longer be considered as the basis of unlimited reciprocal confidence. It may be that the people of the South African Republic will even now thankfully accept from Her Majesty's Government some alleviation of the burden imposed upon them, but whatever concessions Her Majesty's Government may be prepared to make, reciprocal confidence between the British and Dutch colonists will then only revive when Her Majesty's Government also will accept the Sand River Convention as the historical basis of all further arrangements. Any settlement not founded upon this basis cannot but be of a merely temporary character; only upon this basis can a permanent settlement be secured.[2]

It will be noted that the deputation claims to speak, not only on behalf of the Transvaal burghers, but of the Dutch colonists, and that this is not a slip of the pen is proved by the fact that a few lines lower down the conviction of the latter is cited in support of their contention:

[1] As matter of fact, it was not a treaty, and the Convention was never ratified.
[2] C. 3947, p. 4.

Starting from this historical basis, they venture to lay before your Lordship candidly, and without any circumlocution, the following proposals: (1) That the Pretoria Convention may not be altered in some of its articles, but be replaced by a new agreement founded on the principles of international law, and in genetical connection with the Sand River Treaty. (2) That in this new agreement every connection by which we are now bound to England should not be broken, but that the relation of a dependency *publici juris*, in which our country now stands to the British Crown, may be replaced by that of two contracting Powers. (3) That we do not desire such an extension of territory as would come in conflict either with the legal claims of the surrounding native tribes or with the commercial interests of the neighbouring colonies and States, but that we are exclusively aiming at such a settlement of the relations as may prove effectual to secure a situation of permanent peace and liberty. (4) That all restrictions by which the South African Republic is prevented from taking action on behalf of humanity and peace, according to the demands of the moment, in its intercourse with the native tribes on its borders, may be removed. (5) That the Government of our country is heartily willing to acknowledge and to pay in due time every just debt, and proposes that your Lordship should either charge the Republic with the debts incurred before the annexation only, or to investigate with the deputation concerning the amount of debt which may be legally charged against the Republic. Proposals to which we scarcely need to add: Firstly, that the Government of Pretoria has no other intention than that all rights of extraneous parties stipulated as transitory provisions in the Pretoria Convention, and which hitherto could not yet or not yet fully be carried out should be embodied in the new settlement. Secondly, that the Government of Pretoria shall be found willing at all times to offer for the rights and interests of the natives all such guarantees as are prescribed by divine law and human feeling.

The object of these proposals is perfectly clear. It is to secure to the Transvaal Government a recognition of the sovereign independence of the Transvaal State, and to free it from all obligations implying a state of dependency upon Great Britain. Lord Derby replied[1] that the Sand River Convention stood upon the same basis as the Pretoria Convention, and that, like it,

> 'It was not a treaty between two contracting Powers, but was a declaration made by the Queen, and accepted by certain persons at that time her subjects, of the conditions under which, and the extent to which, Her Majesty could permit them to manage their own affairs without interference. It did not create a South African Republic with a political organization and defined boundaries, and the conditions with which it dealt had to a great extent disappeared before the annexation in 1877 terminated the independence of the Republic, and, as was declared by your Volksraad, in

[1] C. 3947, p. 6.

confirming the Convention of Pretoria, brought the Sand River Convention to an end.'

This was resolute enough; but the deputation lost not heart, but rejoined on November 23, 1883:[1]

In order to at once acquaint your Lordship with the drift of our proposals . . . we wish to frankly answer your Lordship's questions. (1) Our Government is prepared, as it always has been prepared, to preserve and to assist in preserving peace and order on or near our frontier. (2) We are willing to agree that the interested parties in those regions shall be in future subject to the government of the South African Republic or of the Cape Colony, according to their own free choice, as our only object is to see them placed under some settled form of government so that the difficulties at present existing may be removed, and prevented in future. (3) For this reason we cannot give your Lordship the assurance that one of the roads forming the trade route from the colony to the northward will be excluded from our territory, for by giving such assurance we should be obliged to chip off from the Republic some chiefs and their tribes who have already repeatedly protested against being removed from our protection. But in addition to that road, there are other roads from the colony to the northward. The Government of the Republic, as we have stated above, will always be ready to arrange commercial relations with the colony. (4) Should our proposals for the regulations of the western boundary be adopted, the Transvaal will border on the colony, and our Government will take effective measures to preserve the neutrality of our frontiers, and will be prepared to bear its fair share of responsibility of such provisions as the two Governments may deem necessary to take for the preservation of peace and order on that border.

As to this, it should be noted that the deputation substitutes the Government of the Cape Colony for that of the Queen directly in such concessions as it proposes to make. Two days later it submitted a draft treaty, of which Article I. ran as follows:

It is agreed that Her Britannic Majesty recognises and guarantees by this treaty the full independence of the South African Republic, with the right to manage its own affairs according to its own laws without any interference on the part of the British Government, it being understood that this system of non-interference is binding on both parties.

And Lord Derby stated in reply:[2]

The draft treaty which you have submitted . . . is neither in form nor in substance such as Her Majesty's Government could adopt. I will not now enter into a detailed examination of it, as it would be premature to consider the language in which reference would be made to any subject until some understanding has been arrived at with reference to that subject.

A long correspondence ensued as to the boundaries of the

[1] C. 3947, p. 8.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Transvaal, but our concern is elsewhere. A great deal of controversy has been wasted upon the question as to whether the Convention of 1884 amended or superseded the Convention of 1881. It is interesting, therefore, to note that on February 23, 1884, four days before the final signature of the Convention, Mr. Leonard Courtney, writing in the name of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, alludes to it as 'the amended Convention.'[1] That there was no abandonment of the principle of suzerainty is proved, not only by Lord Derby's speech in the House of Lords, in which he declared that the thing remained though the word was abandoned, but by Article III. of the Convention itself:

> If a British officer is appointed to reside at Pretoria or elsewhere within the South African Republic, to discharge functions analogous to those of a Consular officer, he will receive the protection and assistance of the Republic.

If the Convention recognised the independence of the Transvaal, the functions assigned to a British officer would not be analogous to those of a Consular officer, but would be actually those of such an official, and Article IV. still further emphasizes this:

> The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than that of the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty's Government.

On this point the opinion of an eminent Dutch jurist, Professor de Loieter, of Utrecht University,[2] is final. 'It would,' he says in the *Revue de Droits Internationals*, 1896,

> be idle to deny that Article IV. of this Convention, still actually in force, prevents the Republic from being counted among States really sovereign or independent. Sovereignty does not admit of other restrictions than those which are clearly defined and freely accepted by parties contracting on equal terms. An unlimited obligation to submit all engagements made by one Power during a certain period of delay to the approbation of another is incompatible with the idea of sovereignty.

Also, in communicating the Convention to Sir Hercules Robinson, Lord Derby, in speaking of the protection of the

[1] C. 3947, p. 47.
[2] Cited by Mr. E. T. Cook, 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' p. 160 *n*.

natives, used words which leave no doubt as to the position of the Transvaal:

> Such interference would not be permissible in a colony under responsible government, and it would still less be applicable to a country having self-government, as *conceded* under the Convention of Pretoria.

The deputation did not conceal its dissatisfaction, though to the Volksraad it put the best face on things it could. And within a week of its signature Mr. Du Toit, as we have seen, speaking on behalf and with the consent of his colleagues at a banquet at Amsterdam, used the words I have already quoted:

> The South African flag shall yet wave from Table Bay to the Zambesi, be that end accomplished by blood or by ink.

Whatever the views of Mr. Kruger himself, the burghers were led to believe that the South African Republic had been placed in a position of virtual independence.[1] At the meeting of the Volksraad after the London Convention of 1884, an address was unanimously agreed upon on September 6. It was addressed to Messrs. Kruger, S. J. Du Toit and N. J.

[1] There is a resolution of the Volksraad of August 11, 1884, which deserves to be put on record, especially as it was forwarded for publication by the State Secretary, Mr. Bok, to Lord Derby. It has a twofold interest in view of the notoriety of one of the persons thus publicly thanked, and also in view of the very strong language used in the Volksraad in debating the conduct of Great Britain with regard to the Convention. The address runs as follows:

'It was with a sense of extreme satisfaction that the Volksraad learned from the report of the deputation the great goodwill with which its delegates were received on its arrival in England by the Prime Minister Gladstone, as also by Her Majesty's Minister for the Colonies, Lord Derby, and the Volksraad wished the above-named gentlemen to receive herewith the assurance that such goodwill shown to the deputation will always be gratefully remembered by the Volksraad and the people.

'Again has the Volksraad seen from the report of the deputation that its delegates were so loyally assisted by that unwearied champion of truth and justice, that second knight "without fear or blemish," Dr. Clark, who always is, and was, and still remains, our defender against the European press and the British public, which have so often judged us wrongly, and against which this upright friend of the Transvaalers has always fought with the strength of truth, supported by the justice of the cause. Dr. Clark may receive herewith the assurance of the Volksraad that his name is engraved in shining letters on the grateful and tremulous hearts of the people of the South African Republic.

'The heartfelt thanks of the Volksraad is also tendered in the name of the people to Mr. Stanton, who so disinterestedly rendered his important services to the deputation, and thus made its work less difficult and expensive.

'Lastly, the heartfelt thanks of the Volksraad is tendered to all persons and institutions in England which showed any evidence of sympathy to our deputation, and therefore to our people, and which thus justified the motto of the English nation—"Justice."'

Smit, and the more interesting portions of it run as follows:

We know that you recognise and confess that, through the Almighty, and Him alone, your steps have been led on to the path of freedom and glory. We know, too, that in your journey on the ocean, and through the lands of Europe, you observed the finger of God.

We doubt not that you, with the whole people, offer your thanks to the Lord of Hosts, who has set us, once forgotten, before the eyes of the whole Christian world.

But although you, as we, praise alone the providence of God, which called us to take our place in the ranks of the nations, yet it is meet that we, as the representatives of the people, should offer to you our thanks for that which you may do as instruments of God.

And whence, then, shall begin that praise which is your due?

It is scarcely possible for us, even in rough outline, to sketch your services to our country.

Was it not through your efforts that again, and this time so clearly, the righteousness of our cause has been proved to the people of England?

Is it not, also, through your unwearied efforts that old Holland is again become mindful of its brothers so long forgotten?[1]

Is it not through you that even the mightiest rulers of Europe have recognised and saluted our Republic and its rights?

Is it not through your devotion to the interest of the land that Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, and Portugal, have entered on friendship with us?

Who can estimate what benefits for this our country (*Ons land*) will spring from the many connections with mighty potentates of all lands, with so many illustrious persons of Europe?

Only distant posterity shall be able to reckon those benefits for its contemporaries, and then in intenser speech, with higher inspiration and enthusiasm, than we can now show speak of your invaluable services. The Muse of history will record your names, noble three, in golden letters on the roll of the history of the South African Republic. When your bodies have returned to the dust, your names will still live in the hearts and vibrate on the lips of child and child's child, who will bless you as their benefactors. Receive, noble sirs, these weak words as the interpreter of deepest gratitude, and be assured that it is our eager wish that the blessing of the Most High may rest on your labours, and that it may be your privilege yourselves to see the fruit of your labours.

By October, however, this enthusiasm had something waned, and, according to the *Volksstem*, almost all the members took part in a debate, and condemned the attitude of the British Government in strong language. Thereupon, according to the same authority, Mr. Kruger apologized:

It seemed to him that the Raad was a little too severe in its judgment upon the British Government. He could not say that the British Government had not been willing to hear him. Yet it had let itself be induced to withhold justice from the deputation by lies and fraud on the part of traitors and intriguers, of whom Mr. Mackenzie[2] was one. These

[1] See speech of Mr. Du Toit above. [2] The well-known missionary.

were officials of Her Majesty, whom Her Majesty must believe. He had said that if Her Majesty really caused an impartial investigation to be made they would learn the real truth. But at present the Government went on the letters of liars. The Government in general, and Mr. Gladstone in particular, were influenced by the English people, to whom they must give account. If it had not been for Mr. Mackenzie and the High Commissioner, everything would have been right. These liars had stirred up the people to stand in the way of the Government, and therefore the deputation had approached the people with their memorandum. His Honour would not blame Her Majesty or Her Majesty's Government for everything. Yet he agreed that the liars and intriguers whom he had mentioned were the cause that everything was not settled as they wished.

Despite all this, however, the Afrikander party flattered itself that it had won a great victory, as may be gathered from a sentence in *Die Patriot* in this same month of September:

The sooner, therefore, the error disappears that we are an English colony, the sooner there will be unity and peace amongst us, in which case the standard expression, 'English and anti-English,' if it does not disappear altogether, will have to be changed into 'Afrikander and anti-Afrikander.'

It is unnecessary to tell in detail the duplicity and hostility in which the Transvaal Executive indulged before the ink on the Convention was dry. As Mr. Rhodes said at Vryburg on September 3, 1898:

The greatest raider in Africa is President Kruger. Once he raided his own people in the Free State, and twice he raided us in Stellaland and at Tuli; in fact, raiding has been taught in South Africa by President Kruger.

When an attempt was made, with the scarcely veiled connivance of the Transvaal, to establish an independent State in Stellaland, which the Convention recognised as British territory, the Boers, who had established themselves there, finding incorporation with the Transvaal barred, drew up a memorial to the Cape Parliament, praying for annexation to the colony, alleging as their motive that 'they can never be content to allow their lawful property to be taken from them, or to be ruled by a British Resident.'[1] Again, in Article XVIII. of their memorial:

The memorialists, to their great surprise, have learned that the British

C. 4194, p. 4.

Government has thought fit to appoint a certain Rev. Mackenzie, formerly a missionary in these parts, as Resident over Bechuanaland; that it can be proved that he has wilfully misrepresented the conditions and history of this country to the British Government and the British public, and that he has untruthfully stigmatized your memorialists, probably for the purpose of promoting his own welfare; and that, consequently, his assumption of office as British Resident here is anticipated with the greatest aversion by your memorialists.

And in an issue of the *Volksstem*,[1] published after the signing of the Convention, there is given a proclamation by David Massouw against the provisions of the new Convention as to Bechuanaland:

The proposed arrangement is unjust, and robs them of an indispensable portion of their lawful property; that a British Resident being appointed for Bechuanaland means encouragement to Mankoroane to renew attacks upon those who fall outside the South African Republic limits; proceeds to protest, and declares will not acknowledge, accept, or permit any cutting off of territory or the fixing of any such border line, or respect any arrangement made without their consent, and will not submit to any authority which may attempt to appropriate their property, and appeals to the general principles of national right. Goes on to call on all the white population of South Africa who stand for truth and right, and whose blood relations have established themselves in Massouw's land, and obtained rights from him for the help given against Mankoroane in the territory now known as Stellaland; and declares that in the name and with the help of the Almighty Heavenly King they will resist, and once more seek the help of all friends of truth.

The language here is characteristic of Boer proclamations, which invariably assume the Divine countenance for all Boer actions, however questionable. Still more significant was a meeting of the Executive Council of Stellaland on April 17, 1884, in which it was resolved that 'His Honour the Administrator (Mr. Van Niekerk) is further commissioned to enter into correspondence with the Honourable Mr. Hofmeyr, member of the Cape Parliament, *in his capacity as leader of the African party*, with a view to obtaining an expression of his sentiment and his co-operation in this matter.' Nothing could better illustrate the whole system of intrigue which has from the first done duty for statesmanship with the Executive of the South African Republic. There is, first, an unauthorized movement connived at by the Government, as was the case at this time, not only in Stellaland, but in Zululand. And next there is an appeal to the Cape Dutch

[1] C. 4194, p. 9.

to support the said unauthorized movement. As Mr. Mackenzie pointed out,

> It is plain enough to everybody here (Vryburg) that their (the Boers') real object is to secure Bechuanaland for the Transvaal. Their first move is to displace the Imperial Government under feigned adherence to the project of annexation to the Cape Colony. Having been successful in this, their next step would be to point out to the burghers the higher taxation of the Cape Colony, the difference in its laws, etc., and thus move the people to throw themselves into the arms of the Transvaal.

And on August 6 he closes an express from Mafeking, in which there is this passage:[1]

> To-day the Commandant and Native Commissioner Snyman came with six others as a deputation from the South African Republic. They produced a letter, signed 'Paul Kruger,' in which they were instructed to do their utmost to stop the fight. But Field-Cornet Theumissen, who was with them, said that he had received verbal instructions from the President to get Montsioa's consent to the annexation of the Baralong country by the Transvaal. Snyman, who was the principal speaker, said that if the Baralongs would come under the flag of the South African Republic they would have a lasting peace, the volunteers would be withdrawn, and no other power, black or white, should touch them. If, on the contrary, they refused, then the war would go on. Montsioa said that they could not, as a treaty had been signed by which the country had been handed over to the protection of Her Majesty, and that if they (the Boers of the deputation) had anything to say anent it, they must speak with me as Her Majesty's representative here. Snyman replied that they could not recognise me in any way. The convention was not signed. There was still time for Montsioa to refuse to have anything to do with the British Government, which would never help them. 'Where,' asked he, 'is the promised help? It will never come. The British Government will swallow you up as it did Jantje Botlasitse and others, whereas if you come under the Government of the South African Republic peace will last as long as the sun. England will never fight for you against the Transvaal. She has no soldiers, and President Kruger, when in Europe, entered into treaties of alliance with ten European Powers—amongst others, with France and Germany—by which the independence of the Transvaal is secured, and England is prevented from fighting against us. Look at Mankoroane. England promised to extend its protection to him, with the result that he has nothing now; all his land is taken from him.'

At the time of these disputes with regard to Stellaland, Mr. Mackenzie had been withdrawn because of his unpopularity with the Afrikanders, and in his place Mr. Rhodes had been appointed, as enjoying the confidence of both white races. He was thus an unimpeachable witness as to the part played by the Transvaal in this matter. And in concluding

[1] C. 4213, p. 34.

his report to the High Commissioner on September 20, 1884, said:

I have now completed my account of this special service, but I cannot conclude my report without laying before your Excellency the opinion which I have been very reluctantly compelled to form with respect to the whole question of these disturbances in Bechuanaland. The evidence which I have had to go upon, and the many indications not amounting to actual proof, have forced me to the conclusion that the Transvaal Government have had it within their power, but have never had the will, to check the violation of native territory upon their borders at any moment they might choose. If I seek for an explanation of the attitude in which they have persevered, I can only find it in the supposition that they then in good faith anticipated the Convention of London as a final settlement of their boundary on the western side. They have been constrained to put the seal of formal ratification upon an instrument in which they did not really concur, but they have reserved to themselves in their own minds the right of tearing it to pieces so soon as a favourable opportunity of escape from its obligations should arise. As a means to the end which they have in view, they have deemed it politic to encourage the establishment upon their border of a number of petty republics, believing the situation thus created would become so unendurable to all parties concerned that Her Majesty's Government would soon cease to offer any opposition to the absorption by the Transvaal, to which their claims have not in the recent settlement been recognised.

I claim, as the result of the mandate with which your Excellency was pleased to honour me, that Stellaland has been pacified and a collision averted which threatened the most serious results. The people of Stellaland I believe to be for the most part animated by a sincere desire for the establishment of law and order in their midst upon a basis which could not be easily shaken. Annexation to the colony is the dominating idea with which they are possessed, and I am of opinion that the minority who manifest an inclination to cast in their lot with the Transvaal do so, not from deliberate preference, but from motives of distrust as to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government. If sufficient assurances could but be obtained that the policy which led to the establishment of the protectorate would be persevered in to the end, even those who are now malcontent would be reconciled to the present settlement, always provided that the territory were not permanently kept under direct and Ministerial supervision, but admitted to the principles now enjoyed by the inhabitants of this colony.[1]

With regard to the complicity of the Transvaal Govern-

[1] It is interesting to compare this despatch with an article by Mr. J. A. Hobson in the January number of the *Contemporary Review* of the year 1900. 'The first public post,' says Mr. Hobson, 'occupied by Mr. Rhodes was that of Deputy Commissioner to Bechuanaland in 1884-85, at the time when batches of Transvaal Boers, presumably with the connivance of the Transvaal Government, had entered that country, and established the republics of Stellaland and Goshen. The possession of Bechuanaland by the Transvaal would have closed the road to the north against British Imperialism. This was clearly understood by the rival claimants, and when remonstrances had failed, Sir Charles Warren was sent up with an Imperial force to assert the Imperial interest and to establish the Imperial control. What part did Mr. Rhodes play at this critical juncture? He threw all the weight of his influence for the Transvaal, and against the Imperial authority.'

ment, this passage from a letter addressed by Mr. Wright, Assistant Commissioner of Bechuanaland, to Mr. Rhodes, will be read with interest. It is dated September 5, 1884:

The (Boer) volunteers themselves have openly stated in Zeerust that Mr. Joubert, during his term of office as Acting President, sent them a letter expressing his sympathy with them, adding that if he could he would force every young man in the country to help them. Again, although there is a law limiting the amount of ammunition to be sold to individuals, the Landdrost of Zeerust ordered the magazine master to let one Louw, a well-known volunteer, have 40,000 cartridges. The cartridges were openly taken from Zeerust, and their destination was perfectly well known. The Landdrost of Lichtenburg also supplied them with a lot. The Government of the South African Republic has the sole monopoly of the sale of ammunition, and gave orders to the above-mentioned Landdrosts to let any man of good character have that number of cartridges. As it is impossible for one man to use such a number during the year, I am compelled to believe that the Government knew the purpose for which the cartridges were required.

The present interest in the raid upon Montsioa's territory is threefold. In the first place, it bears a striking resemblance to that of Dr. Jameson and Sir John Willoughby, some eleven years later, on the Transvaal, from which, however, it differs in this essential particular: that it had the support of the Government of the South African Republic, which took no steps at all to check the sympathy of the burghers with those Uitlanders of theirs who had established themselves in the protectorate unasked and undesired. The position of these freebooters is thus defined by Sir Hercules Robinson, whom it is the fashion now to acclaim as a model High Commissioner:

The northern portion of the protectorate has been invaded and occupied by a gang of marauders;[1] the British Assistant Commissioner (Mr. Wright) has been taken prisoner by them under a flag of truce, and kept in confinement until he effected his escape; the British Deputy Commissioner (Mr. Rhodes) has been forcibly prevented by them from proceeding to Montsioa's station; and that chief, who is under the proclaimed protection of the Queen, has been crushed to the ground. It appears to the Governor that if, in these circumstances, British honour and authority are not vindicated by the expulsion of the marauders from Montsioa's country, Her Majesty's Government must abandon the protectorate. . . . That country, as has been observed, is already in the possession of the freebooters, who are now engaged in parcelling out the land amongst themselves, and offering it publicly for sale.[2]

[1] Minute to Ministers, October 15, 1884, C. 4252, p. 31.

[2] There is no question at all but that General Joubert actively supported the freebooters, although he himself was the official appointed by the South African Republic to maintain peace upon the border.

The second point of interest is important for the light that it throws upon recent events. It is a common cry in a certain quarter that Lord Milner disregarded the advice of his responsible Ministers; in hundreds of articles in newspapers and magazines, and in scores of speeches by conspicuous politicians, his conduct is contrasted with that of his predecessors. It has been said that he was the first High Commissioner to disregard the opinions of those who were entitled and bound to give him advice.[1] As matter of fact, there was the strongest possible conflict of opinion between Sir Hercules Robinson and Mr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Uppington and his colleagues as to the proper treatment of the freebooters. The High Commissioner, backed by even so irresolute a Minister as Lord Derby, insisted upon the enforcement of the Convention, and the expulsion of the marauders from the territory in which they had illegally settled. His Ministers, on the other hand, were desirous, in order to avoid friction with the Transvaal, of parleying with the freebooters, and of coming to what they described as an amicable arrangement with them. Sir Hercules stated the case in a minute to Ministers of October 19, 1884:[2]

It must be borne in mind that when in May last Mr. Mackenzie, the Deputy Commissioner, proclaimed Montsioa, his people and country, to be under British protection, Montsioa was in the undisturbed possession of his garden grounds and grazing lands. Since that time his country has been invaded by a band of marauders. The British Assistant Commissioner has been entrapped under a flag of truce, and afterwards imprisoned; the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Rhodes, has been insulted. The most brutal outrages have been committed, women and children having been shot, and unarmed men murdered in cold blood; peaceful traders have been robbed of all they possessed, and the robbers are now settling down in possession of Montsioa's country and property, that chief who was under the protection of England having been crushed to the ground.

These being the circumstances with which we have to deal, the

[1] Mr. Hobson, for instance, on the first page of his 'War in South Africa,' says: 'It is of urgent importance that Englishmen should understand how sternly and strongly the policy of Downing Street was resented by the elective Assemby of what has hitherto been held to be, and distinctly holds itself to be, by right a substantial self-governing colony. The Home Government and the High Commissioner are held to have ignored and overridden the judgment of a strong Ministry representing a people whose commercial and political interests and experience entitle them to paramount consideration in the settlement of this Transvaal issue.'

[2] C. 4275, p. 12.

Ministers propose that they should go into the country, and by an 'amicable arrangement' endeavour to effect a settlement which will result in annexation to the Colony, thus securing for the Colony an unfettered trade route to the interior, and for Her Majesty's Government relief from the heavy burden of governing the protectorate.

The Governor thinks that if Ministers are willing to leave the marauders, or a considerable section of them, in possession of Montsioa's country, the advantages specified may possibly be secured; but such a course would not be an honourable fulfilment of the promise of protection made to Montsioa by Her Majesty's Government, even although that chief, in preference to complete annihilation, 'might be willing to accept compensation otherwise.'

Moreover, the Governor finds it difficult to understand how it would be possible, without compromising the honour of the Colonial as well as of the Imperial Governments, to attempt an 'amicable arrangement' with criminals, or to give an implied acquiescence in acts which are as subversive of all law and order as they are revolting to every feeling of humanity.

In stipulating, therefore, for the restoration to Montsioa of the lands which were held by him when he was placed under the protection of the Queen, the Governor was not influenced by any mere desire for 'the gratification of the sentiment that every inch of land held by Montsioa at the time of the establishment of the protectorate should be restored to him,' but by the feeling that it is essential to the honour of Her Majesty's Government that there should be a substantial fulfilment of an express promise and an abstention from any implied sanction to acts of robbery and murder.

The Governor is aware that, if the course proposed by him be adopted, 'grave responsibilities will be incurred by Her Majesty's Imperial Government,' and he has so informed the Secretary of State. But he thinks, in the circumstances stated, these responsibilities should be faced, as, after the most anxious consideration, he can see no other course by which British honour and authority can be vindicated in the protectorate.

The Ministers were still obdurate, and insisted upon undertaking a third mission, which proved practically abortive. But their attitude towards the Imperial Government was significant, especially in view of events. It must be, of course, remembered that that Ministry was dependent upon the Bond's support. In their minute of November 3, 1884, they say:[1]

With reference to the minute of His Excellency the Governor and High Commissioner, Ministers regret that Her Majesty's Imperial Government declare it to be impossible to suspend military preparations, as they believe that the raising of a military force whilst Ministers are attempting to effect a peaceful settlement will cause such a feeling of irritation as might possibly imperil the success of the mission proposed to be undertaken by them.

In the peculiar circumstances of South Africa and in view of the necessity for harmony between the leading races of European extraction, Ministers are further of opinion that it is an unsound principle to employ

[1] C. 4275, p. 36.

such a force as that contemplated by Her Majesty's Imperial Government.

Ministers are therefore bound to record their protest against the proposal; for, notwithstanding the fear which they entertain that they may be unsuccessful in consequence of the steps proposed to be undertaken in opposition to their wishes, Ministers are so anxious to avert warfare, to secure peace, and to endeavour to unite persons of all nationalities subject to the sovereignty of Her Majesty the Queen in her Colonial Government, that they are prepared to proceed immediately to the protected territory with a view to endeavouring to effect a peaceful settlement.

It must be borne in mind that Ministers who came to this conclusion had before them the sworn testimony of Mr. George Kendrick Ellis of Taungs:

Montsioa informed me that Joubert told him that they—the Boers—had shot the English down like dogs in the Transvaal, and that they—the English—were now afraid to interfere with the Boers; that they had sent Rhodes to Rooi-grond to make peace, but the Rooi-gronders had turned him out of the country; that the English were now on their knees begging the Transvaal to let them have the interior trade route, and the Boers were only considering whether they should let the English have it or not.

After signing the letter, which was read to him (Montsioa) very rapidly in a language (Dutch) he did not understand, and sounded to him like so much gibberish, Joubert told Montsioa that he and his people must be present at the hoisting of the Transvaal flag in his country, and ordered him to expend his very last bag of gunpowder in firing off a salute.

It is quite true that the herd-boys—mere children—were ruthlessly slaughtered by the Boers, and it is also a fact that they treated the dead body of Bethell in the most outrageous and indecent manner. They tied it into a chair, and placed a tin beaker in the lifeless hand, and jeered at their atrocious handiwork. The day following the great fight, when Bethell was murdered, the Boers went out and despatched all the wounded they could find on the battle-field, using long needle-like instruments for the purpose of ascertaining whether life was extinct.

It was not astonishing, therefore, that the English-speaking population should support the High Commissioner, and should flood him with resolutions begging him to uphold the honour and authority of the Crown.

A point of the greatest interest is the support accorded by the Bond, not only to the Transvaal, but to the Goshen free-booters. Resolutions were adopted in every town and district in which the Bond had a branch. Most of them contained the usual expression of loyalty to the Crown, but one and all showed plainly on which side would be their sympathies if what they described 'as the strong arm of England' were called in to inforce respect for a Convention

only just ratified. At a meeting held at the Paarl, October 27, 1884, it was determined unanimously that a memorial should be drafted in the spirit of a resolution moved by Mr. D. F. Du Toit and seconded by Mr. Malherbe :[1]

That this meeting rejoices in the restoration of peace in Bechuanaland, and expects that Her Majesty's Government will use its best endeavours to consolidate that peace by transferring its responsibilities in Bechuanaland to the Colonial Government ;[2] while they rejoice in the freedom which Her Majesty's subjects enjoy in South Africa, they would hope that on behalf of Her Majesty's Government the adjustment of affairs will be entrusted to our Colonial Government in conjunction with the Government of the South African Republic, *duly observing the wishes and desires of the majority of the volunteers and others in those parts, even if it should lead to the restoration of the protectorate granted, but under the circumstances withdrawn, by the Transvaal Government.*

With regard to this petition, there is this singular communication from the Rev. James F. Curlewis, dated November 4, 1884, from the Parsonage of the English Church, Paarl, to the Prime Minister of the Cape :

SIR,

I beg leave to bring to your notice that a certain petition concerning affairs in Bechuanaland about to be presented to you from some of the inhabitants of this place has been signed by about fifty pupils attending a school known as the Paarl Gymnasium. Among the number is my own son, eleven years of age. *The master of his class recommended him to sign if he did not wish for civil war.*[3] I would further beg to be allowed to withdraw the signature (Robert G. Curlewis) of my said son, as it was appended without my knowledge or consent.

Many of the resolutions directly threatened civil war, as may be gathered from one addressed to the Prime Minister from the Krantz Valley, District of Clanwilliam, which is typical of hosts of others printed in the blue-books :[4]

KRANTZ VALLEY,
DISTRICT OF CLANWILLIAM,
November 5, 1884.

HONOURABLE SIR,

Whereas affairs in Bechuanaland are in a most critical condition. Whereas a memorial of the inhabitants to the Administrator and members of the Executive Council of Stellaland clearly indicates their desire of being incorporated with the South African Republic or Cape Colony—which would prove to be the best method of adjusting affairs in those parts in an amicable manner, and of insuring the triumph of the cause of law and order.

Whereas, resolutions have been passed by a certain party, and a

[1] C. 4275, p. 44.
[2] That is, to the puppets of the Bond.
[3] The italics are mine.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 59.

memorial drafted and signed invoking the strong arm of England. Whereas this would be attended with results fatal to the whole of South Africa: therefore we, the undersigned, loyal subjects of Her Majesty, our respected Queen, humbly beg the Colonial Government, by means of its intervention and mediation, to avert, if possible, this imminent danger, and to arrange affairs in Bechuanaland by negotiations with the Government of the South African Republic, *duly observing the desires and wishes of the majority of the volunteers in these parts.*[1] We, the undersigned, shall continue in the expectation that this, our humble petition, may be taken into favourable consideration.

(Signed) G. J. C. VAN WYK.
(And forty-five others.)

It is important to bear in mind that throughout these negotiations the Afrikander Bond, for all practicable purposes, identifies the Government of Cape Town, which held office by its support, with the Government of the South African Republic. To illustrate the marked differences between the High Commissioner and the Government, I shall quote here the resolutions adopted by a large and influential public meeting held at Kimberley on December 8, 1884:[2]

Resolution No. 1: That the settlement of Bechuanaland proposed by (Cape) Ministers is repudiated by this meeting, as derogatory to the dignity of the British Empire, unjust to the native races under British protection, and fraught with danger to the interests of this colony; and that this meeting is further of opinion that, by endeavouring to pledge the colony to the annexation of Bechuanaland on the proposed conditions, Messrs. Uppington and Sprigg have forfeited the confidence of the public.

Resolution No. 2: That, in the opinion of this meeting, the occupation of Bechuanaland by Imperial forces, and the administration of its affairs by an Imperial officer, are, in the present condition of affairs, absolutely essential to the welfare of Her Majesty's subjects in South Africa.

Resolution No. 3: That this meeting hereby records its hearty appreciation of the firm and dignified attitude maintained by His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Hercules Robinson, as Her Majesty's High Commissioner, in the peculiar and difficult circumstances connected with the recent occurrences in Bechuanaland.

To what a point the Bond extended its sympathy for the Goshen freebooters is shown by a resolution of the Congress for the Provincial Bestuur, consisting of forty-five delegates from twenty-five district branches of the Bond, and representing, according to Mr. Hofmeyr and others, 'some thousands of registered voters, loyal subjects of Her

[1] The italics are mine.

[2] Kimberley, of course, was more interested than the rest of the colony in the fate of Bechuanaland.

Majesty the Queen of England.' We have seen how Mr. Bethell[1] was murdered in cold blood by persons alleged to be burghers of the South African Republic. Sir Charles Warren demanded the extradition of the alleged murderers, and the present resolution is in connection with this demand.

> 'This Congress views with alarm the report conveyed by recent telegrams that it is the intention of General Sir Charles Warren to demand from the Transvaal Government the extradition of several persons alleged to be murderers of the late Mr. Bethell . . . that, in expressing its disapproval of the above proceedings of General Sir Charles Warren, this Congress desires it to be understood that it is not the abettor of lawlessness; much less does it wish to screen crime when such can be legitimately and lawfully brought home free from doubt with impartiality, in accordance with the laws of the country where committed. But that in the two cases referred to[2] the proceedings already taken, and expected, according to report, still to be taken, are impolitic, and much to be regretted, as, even if the deeds referred to can be regarded as wrongful, it has been generally understood, especially in the case of Honey, that under the circumstances they have been condoned, and would not be raked up. And therefore the proceedings of Sir Charles Warren in the matter of inquiry and prosecutions instituted may produce the most lamentable consequences to the peace and prosperity, not only of this colony, but to the two Republics.'[3]

The significance of this resolution, of course, lies less in the calm assumption that Her Majesty's Government would condone the cold-blooded murder of a British subject than in the sympathy implied with Bethell's murderers, for whom there was not even the palliation that they were citizens of Cape Colony.

In a despatch dated June 8, 1885, Sir Charles Warren summarizes the aspects of the Bechuanaland Expedition, which are of great significance in view of recent events.

> The expedition (he says) on its arrival in South Africa was received with acclamation from all parties at Cape Town, because it was recognised that the Cape Colony was fast slipping away from the hands of England. It was felt that the expedition alone would arrest this.

[1] See *supra*, pp. 295-6, footnote.
[2] There was another case.
[3] C. 4432, p. 116.

For once in the history of South Africa the rival English politicians and English newspapers of the colony united with one voice, and this was because they all knew that it was the one chance left for securing the peace of South Africa *and our supremacy in it.*

The political agitators were keeping the whole country seething in a ferment, and so strongly was this felt that from all quarters I received information of the precautions that would be necessary to secure the safety of the expedition on its going up country. The question as to whether we should arrive at Hopetoun without collision was seriously discussed, and letters were received by me, and open threats made in a certain newspaper, that the trains would be wrecked. I am not charging the respectable Cape Colonists with harbouring such sentiments, nor do I wish to enlarge upon this subject. The methods adopted for frustrating all opposition in Cape Colony are now matters of the past, and need not be dwelt on; but it should not be forgotten that Bond meetings were convened to protest against our advance, and had it not been that I occupied the railway terminus and a site on the Orange River near Hopetoun before they could meet, there is no doubt that we should have encountered considerable opposition. Our march, however, was too rapid for the sympathizers of the filibusters, as I had our advance party encamped on the Orange River within one month of our leaving England. At Hopetoun I received deputations and a letter (copy enclosed), detailing the excited condition of the people, and their determination to close on our rear as we advanced, and I may mention that the letter is written by a gentleman in whom the present Prime Minister of the Cape Colony reposes great confidence.

This is the letter referred to, the name of the writer of which, of course, is not given:

December 26, 1884.

SIR,

I think it right to inform you, in case that you should not have been apprised of the fact in any other manner, that disloyalty is rampant among the Dutch farmers with which —— district is populated. The officers of the different regiments will probably be met with exuberant expressions of loyalty as the troops are passing through, but these expressions are not to be trusted. It is the opinion of the few educated and loyal farmers upon whose word reliance can be placed, that, so soon as the ball is opened in Bechuanaland, a number of men will either leave this to recruit the rebel forces, or will endeavour to interrupt communications between the base and the front. I do not attach any great importance to the *power* for mischief of these people, but I consider that it is my duty to inform you that, at any rate, their *will* is fully developed.[1]

I have dealt at length with this episode of our history in South Africa for more than one reason. In the first place, I have wished to dispel the ridiculous impression, sedulously cultivated, that the Boers and their sympathizers are naturally sensitive on questions of political morality. We have been told even by so good an authority as Mr. Schreiner, as well as by a crowd of persons who cannot claim to be

[1] The italics are the writer's.

authorities at all, that the Jameson Raid came as a shock to the delicate moral sentiments of the Dutch. As matter of fact, Mr. Rhodes was not far wrong when he said that South Africa had learned the art of raiding from Paul Kruger.[1]

The Convention of 1884 had hardly been concluded before Boers from the South African Republic raided territory recognised as British by that instrument, and two at least of the most powerful men in the Republic—Joubert and Du Toit—encouraged and patronized the raiders. Even when England made it manifest that the limit of concession had been reached, and that she was determined to enforce respect for Conventions voluntarily contracted, the President and his Government made desperate efforts to secure for their raiders the spoils of their enterprise. With these facts fresh in their memory, it is ridiculous to suppose that, however much Boers resented the Jameson Raid, their moral sense was outraged by it as an infringement of international law.

In the second place, I have tried to expose another fallacy, which has done better than yeoman service in this controversy. We have been told time after time with wearisome reiteration that the Dutch and English colonists were settling down in mutual affection and respect, when a greedy and unscrupulous gang of capitalists invaded South Africa, and for their own selfish and sordid objects set the two white races by the ears. Every event thus far chronicled in these pages occurred before an ounce of gold had been extracted from the Witwatersrand, and before any but a few shrewd prospectors suspected that the Transvaal was something more

[1] There is an interesting passage in the little brochure, 'From Boer to Boer and Englishman,' published by Mr. Paul M. Botha, for twenty-one years a member of the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, which recalls one incident of unsuccessful raiding in which racial feeling could have played no part. 'It may not be remembered,' he says, 'by everybody that the Transvaal in 1857, during the presidency of Boschof, invaded the Orange Free State territory with an armed force. Why? Because they preposterously claimed the Orange Free State. I have particular knowledge of this matter, because I took part in the commando which our Government sent to meet the Transvaal forces. The dispute was eventually amicably settled, but, incredible as it may seem, the Transvaal had actually sent five persons, headed by the notorious Karel Geere, to Moshesh, the Basuto chief, to prevail upon him to attack *us*, their kinsmen, in the rear. I was one of the patrol that captured Geere and his companions, some of whom I got to know subsequently, and who revealed to me the whole dastardly plot.'

than a beggarly array of veld and kopje. Even in those pre-capitalist days we have seen the Afrikander Bond take sides with the South African Republic in all disputes between it and the Imperial Government, even when the terms of the Convention left no doubt as to the merits of the case; the Bond was even ready to allow the Transvaal Government to interfere with the access of Cape Colony into the interior rather than that there should be any expansion of the British Empire. Mr. Schreiner, in his evidence before the House of Commons Committee, fully admitted this, but he seemed not to have grasped the very obvious explanation. There are no people in the world so sensitive to any injury to their material interests as the Afrikander Dutch. Why, then, it may be asked, did they constantly allow Mr. Kruger to cut off their noses to spite the Imperial face? The answer usually forthcoming in this country is that supplied by Mr. Schreiner, that it can all be explained on the blood-thicker-than-water theory. That explanation, however, will hardly hold good in face of the readiness with which they attack one another on the slightest provocation, or, as often as not, without any provocation at all.[1]

A more obvious if less creditable explanation is given in a remarkable memorandum presented to the Colonial Office by the Rev. John Mackenzie on June 9, 1886. Mr. Mackenzie was advocating, as he had advocated in 1878, the separation of the high commissionership from the governorship of the Cape Colony. After pointing out the separate advantages of such a change, Mr. Mackenzie adds:

> Briefly stated, the beneficial results would be the centralization of all Imperial or general government business. It would be most advantageous to all concerned, the development through exercise of this healthy, central influence, and the elevation of the representative of the Queen from being the servant of a section to be the servant of all South Africa. . . . But it is also of importance for Her Majesty's Government to move in this

[1] 'From the very birth of the Republics,' says Mr. Botha, 'there have been acute internal squabbles. The people now splitting up, and even coming to blows, in separate little republics, such as Lydenburg. Then, again, church disputes rose to such fury that only a dread of England's interference averted civil war. They always united, however, when there was a chance of raiding or grabbing territory. They raided the Orange Free State, they raided Bechuanaland, they raided Zululand, and founded the new republic, now Vryheid, and as recently as 1889-91 they attempted to acquire territory in Rhodesia. . . . If it were possible to imagine that England's restraining influence were withdrawn, we should have witnessed in South Africa scenes such as I have read of in South America.'

matter as soon as possible, for another and sinister movement is on foot. The alternative course is the union of the Transvaal, Free State, and Cape Colony; whether under a republican President or under an English protectorate would seem to be still an open question among the section working for this union. Now, the desire for union is a good thing in itself, but everything depends on its terms and how it is brought about. A union such as the Afrikander Bond people are working for would be a calamity to South Africa. The maxims of anti-progressive people would be supreme everywhere, and they would have constitutional authority to do what they liked if once joined to a colony having responsible government. The name of the Queen would undoubtedly be connected with laws and customs which would offend against the principles of right and justice. The influence of Englishmen and educated Dutch-speaking men would be quite done to death under the superincumbent heavy mass of the uneducated and prejudiced majority. English influence in Natal has its own local disproportion and isolation, and could not be put in the balance. The obvious object for Her Majesty's Government to accomplish is to gratify the feeling for union which really exists in another and more beneficial way. *The real, living question in South Africa to-day is,*[1] Around what are South Africans to unite? One side has spoken, and says, Around Afrikanderism and by corporate union. Her Majesty's Government hitherto have no proposals whatever. In the communication referred to, the High Commissioner does not face this matter at all, and yet it cannot be ignored or avoided. The people in this country and in South Africa whose views I am now expressing would say, Unite around the High Commissioner or Governor-General representing the Imperial Government, and not by unification, but by confederation.[2]

And illustrating this view of the situation by recent experiences in Bechuanaland, Mr. Mackenzie says:

As to Bechuanaland and the free action of the High Commissioner, all the crucial events in the history of the protectorate point in the most alarming manner in the opposite direction.[3] The protectorate was simply snuffed out, and for a time practically given up, owing to the adverse influence of certain colonial politicians. The catastrophe was prevented, not by the High Commissioner, but by the disagreement of the politicians themselves as to the real destination of Bechuanaland. The policy of Her Majesty's Government at this point had been eloquently described by Sir Hercules Robinson at a banquet to which he was invited at the Empire Club before returning to the Cape. His statement was fully endorsed at the time by the Secretary of State, and was received with great public approval. But, alas for territorial government! its recognition of genuine native rights, and its rule that white settlers must occupy and improve their farms, were not popular among certain Cape politicians, and immediate annexation to the Cape was their remedy, and was therefore worked for by these men. After a short time the High Commissioner and Governor gave his sympathy and approval to the colonial party which desired the immediate annexation of Bechuanaland to the Cape. On the other hand, the Afrikander Bond party strongly and openly desired that the decision of Her Majesty's Government in the London Convention should be practically reversed in South Africa, that Bechuanaland should belong to the Transvaal. In order to compass this, and to prevent

[1] The italics are Mr. Mackenzie's. [2] C. 4839, p. 101.

[3] Opposite, that is, to the combination of the office of High Commissioner with that of the governorship of Cape Colony.

collision between the Colony and the Transvaal, which immediate annexation of Bechuanaland would certainly have involved, they brought forward in the Cape Parliament a proposal for delay, which was carried, the movers hoping in the meantime for the abandonment of the protectorate. Had their programme been carried out, and their estimate of Imperial policy been correct, had Her Majesty's Government not upheld its protectorate by the appearance of the Bechuanaland Expedition, a great calamity would undoubtedly have happened to our rule in South Africa and to the prosperity of that country. A hostile government would to-day have stretched across the country to the north, would have held the key to the interior, to the supremacy in South Africa, and the Cape Colony at the present moment, but for the action of Her Majesty's Government in sending the expedition, would have been shut up on the north as Natal is shut up. Thus the distracting and deleterious influence of rival local politicians and interests were the ruin, and not the help, of the Bechuanaland protectorate, and they were so because they were able to entangle matters through the duplex office of the High Commissioner and Governor. A really free High Commissioner would have organized a force in South Africa able and willing to put down freebooting everywhere, and at comparatively little cost. Be it clearly understood that I am not writing against the holder of certain offices, but against the present duplex arrangement itself, and I sincerely trust that no future High Commissioner will be in such an untenable position. . . . Our supremacy in Southern Africa, lately trembling in the balance, has been secured by the recent action of Her Majesty's Government in Bechuanaland, and is finally secured on the soil of the country by the magnificent offer of land made to us by Khama and other native chiefs. . . . This land is offered, not to a colonial Government, but to the Government and people of England. . . . I am aware that there will be some unavoidable expense connected with this remedial and cautiously progressive policy at the commencement; I am aware, also, that it is usually easier to get money to put down an outrage or an abuse than to prevent the occurrence of one. But it must be remembered that the whole of this expense would never amount to the half of the cost of one expedition or war, while the beneficial results would be permanent and far-reaching, and would include in the course of time the active and responsible management of South African affairs in South Africa itself.

It is not hard to find the key to the riddle in this exposition of Mr. Mackenzie's. There were two parties inside the Afrikander Bond, which were united as to the object, but were not agreed as to the means of attainment. The object, rarely concealed and often openly avowed, was summed up in the phrase, 'Africa for the Afrikanders'; and by Afrikanders was meant, not all the white inhabitants of South Africa, but men of Franco-Dutch descent, and such other Europeans as would accept and submit to the supremacy of that race. As to the means of realizing this common aspiration, there was a difference. It may be illustrated by an ancient story. A seller of hand-brooms was reproaching a rival trader with cutting the prices in their humble and peri-

patetic market. 'I,' said the one, 'steal all the material, and can only make a bare living by selling my brooms at threepence. You sell yours for a penny, and I cannot understand how you do it.' 'Oh,' was the reply, 'I steal my brooms ready-made.' There was a party in the Afrikander Bond which thought that the triumph of Afrikanderdom could be accomplished by backing up the Transvaal in every dispute which occurred between it and the Imperial Government. This section, therefore, had been in favour of handing over Bechuanaland to the South African Republic. There was, however, another section which believed that, if it waited long enough, it could steal South Africa ready-made. It was therefore not averse from the incorporation of Bechuanaland, or, indeed, of any other native territory within the boundaries of the Cape Colony, being shrewd enough to foresee that the Imperial Government would willingly bear the whole cost, in life and treasure, of bringing unoccupied territory under stable and regular government. Patience was a virtue the Afrikander never lacked. He could afford to wait while the brooms were making, and so long as he made it certain that ultimately they would pass into his hands. What he dreaded was the establishment of an Imperial factor in South Africa: he felt that any territory directly governed by representatives of the Queen would form the nucleus of an insuperable barrier to the development of Afrikanderdom, and he was therefore indifferent whether it was the South African Republic or the Cape Colony that annexed Bechuanaland. The result, if such schemes were carried out, would be the same in either case; the establishment of a British protectorate was fatal.

Such were the aim and the feeling of the Dutch Afrikanders. Every scrap of evidence which is cited to demonstrate their loyalty prior to the Raid is quite consistent with a determination to substitute Dutch for British ascendancy throughout the whole of South Africa. It is possible, too, that, for sentimental reasons, a large majority of the Dutch colonists would have genuinely preferred the maintenance of the nominal sovereignty of the Queen. They always drew a very marked distinction between that sovereignty and the authority of the Imperial Government.

Men like Mr. Hofmeyr and the more intelligent politicians of the Afrikander Bond, who were passionately devoted to the idea of a united and independent South Africa, realized that it could only be achieved under a suzerainty which should be merely phantom so far as the internal affairs of South Africa were concerned, but substantial enough as a protection against foreign aggression. Their aim was not so much to get rid of the Englishman as to change his part in South Africa. Instead of being the good-natured master of the house, he was to be retained as the policeman at the door or the gamekeeper in the preserves. They were ready to pay him wages for his services, either in actual cash or in the observance of certain strictly-limited forms of respect for a superiority which was not to be enforced. The contribution sanctioned at a later date by the Bond to the maintenance of the Imperial navy was a part of these wages. A member of the Bond, less cautious than his fellows, confided to a friend of my own then acting as correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, that the vote for the Fleet was 'a splendid blind for John Bull.' It cannot be said that a united and independent South Africa would have made a bad bargain by securing protection for his coasts at the cost of some £30,000 a year; nor would an occasional recognition of the authority of the Queen or a few thousand a year to a *fainéant* Governor have been an excessive price to pay for the substitution of Dutch for British supremacy. At the time of which I am speaking there was no alternative policy for these aspiring Afrikanders. When, through the enterprise of European capitalists, the Transvaal grew wealthy, there came a possibility of a united South Africa, of which the Transvaal should have the hegemony; but the condition of this possibility was, that the men who found the money should have no share in the government. So matters stood at the close of the year 1885, followed by ten years of superficial tranquillity, the causes of which are explained in my next chapter.

NOTE.—In view of the evidence cited above, it may interest my readers to compare the hasty and imperfect judgment of a professed historian. In the prefatory chapter prefixed to the third edition of Mr. James Bryce's 'Impressions of

South Africa,' which was published immediately after the outbreak of the war, we find this review of the situation:

'In Cape Colony and Natal there was before December, 1895, no hostility at all between the British and the Dutch elements. Political parties in Cape Colony were, in a broad sense, British and Dutch, but the distinction was really based not so much on racial differences as on economic interests. The rural element, which desired a protective tariff and laws regulating native labour, was mainly Dutch, the commercial element wholly British. Mr. Rhodes, the embodiment of British Imperialism, was Prime Minister through the support of the Dutch element in the Afrikander Bond. The Englishmen and Dutchmen were everywhere in the best social relations. The old blood sympathy of the Dutch element for the Transvaal Boers, which had been so strongly manifested in 1881, when the latter were struggling for their independence, had been superseded, or at least thrown into the background by displeasure at the unneighbourly policy of the Transvaal Government in refusing public employment to Cape Dutchmen as well as to Englishmen, and in throwing obstacles in the way of trade in agricultural products. This displeasure culminated when the Transvaal Government, in the summer of 1895, closed the drifts (fords) on the Vaal River to the detriment of imports from the colony and the Orange Free State.

'In the Orange Free State . . . . there was perfect good feeling and cordial co-operation in all public matters between the Dutch and the English elements. There was also perfect friendliness to Britain, the old grievances of the diamond-fields dispute and of the rest of the Free State conquest of Basutoland having been virtually forgotten. Towards the Transvaal there was a political sympathy, based partly on kinship, partly on a similarity of republican institutions. But there was also some annoyance at the policy which the Transvaal Government, and especially its Hollander advisers, were pursuing, coupled with the desire to see reforms effected in the Transvaal and the franchise granted to immigrants on more liberal terms.'

CHAPTER VI[1]

MR. RHODES

All men without distinction are allured by immediate advantages; great minds alone are excited by distant good. So long as wisdom in its projects calculates upon wisdom, or relies upon its own strength, it forms none but chimerical schemes, and runs a risk of making itself the laughter of the world; but it is certain of success, and may reckon upon aid and admiration, when it finds a place in its intellectual plans for barbarism, rapacity and superstition, and can render the selfish passions of mankind the executors of its purposes (Schiller's 'History of the Thirty Years' War').[2]

AMONG the personal factors in the South African problem Mr. Rhodes has been, and is likely to be, certainly the most interesting, probably the most potent, and certainly the most misrepresented.

The most ardent of Mr. Rhodes' admirers would not deny that he has his full share of human faults and frailties, but they are not of the kind generally imputed to him. His imperfections are largely superficial, and derived from the environment in which he has passed the greater part of his active life. It has been noted by nearly every writer familiar with the atmosphere of mining camps that it conduces to the formation of a very cynical estimate of human nature, and to a belief in that dictum in which Sir Robert Walpole crystallized his experience of eighteenth-century Parliaments.

[1] This chapter was completed as long ago as February in 1901; at that time I had every reason to believe and to hope that Mr. Rhodes would himself read the pages I had written about him. On the very day (March 26, 1902) that I am passing these pages through the press, Mr. Rhodes died. I have therefore deliberately refrained from altering what I had written and from making any additions to the text. It stands, therefore, in all respects as it was penned thirteen months ago, a plain record of my impressions of a living man as I knew him from intimate personal converse and from a close study of his public utterances.

[2] Bohn's translation, p. 42. Schiller is discussing the character of Henry of Navarre.

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Such an estimate of human nature is entirely consistent (as was proved by Sir Robert himself) with absolute immunity from personal corruption. Probably very few men possessed of such wealth as has been acquired by Mr. Rhodes have ever cared so little about it. To him it has always been a means to an end, and that end a great impersonal one. Not many would have quoted that conversation with General Gordon which has been so much and so stupidly misused against him. He told the story once at the Paarl in the presence of the Bond leaders, men who would thoroughly appreciate its real inwardness. It is worth repeating in his own words, as they were uttered to a meeting of the South African Company:

> I remember meeting General Gordon, and discussing with him why he had not taken the room full of gold from the Emperor of China. General Gordon asked me if I would have taken it, and my reply was: 'Certainly, and three more rooms full if I could have got them.' Because if one has ideas one cannot carry them out without having wealth at one's back.[1]

Wealth at his back for the accomplishment of great Imperial ideas — that is the master-word of Mr. Rhodes' career. For my own part, I regard the extravagant ostentation displayed by many of those who have made colossal fortunes in South Africa as tending distinctly to debase and lower English social life. Of all forms of idol, the Golden Calf has least to be said in its defence. The craze for so-called 'lions,' who are nothing but notorious, is far less mischievous, is also far less silly, than the craze for men whose sole credentials are in their pass-books. For the rest, there can be no manner of doubt that the vulgar ostentation of a certain class of South African millionaire has done not a little to alienate high-minded and sensitive men from sympathy with the wrongs of British subjects in the Transvaal. Park Lane, in fact, made Pretoria possible. From this vice Mr. Rhodes has been singularly, almost unnaturally, exempt. It is true that whithersoever he goes in South Africa he finds a home of his own. His is certainly the most beautiful, but also certainly not the most luxurious, residence in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, and at Kimberley, Salisbury, Bulawayo, and I know not on how

[1] 'Cecil Rhodes: His Political Life and Speeches,' 'Vindex,' p. 319.

many properties of his in different parts of Rhodesia, he has what in England is called 'a place.' At Muizenburg (the Brighton of Cape Town), where he died, he has, indeed, as many as three, but they are mere cottages modestly equipped. On Groot Schuur, his Cape Town residence, built upon the site and plan of one of the delightful old Dutch farmhouses with which Cape Colony is studded, burnt down in part, rebuilt, and readapted, he has lavished what to most men would be a considerable fortune.[1] Yet he lives there, as elsewhere, in that well-bred simplicity which is the most charming characteristic of an English country house. Everything is of the best, and the old farmhouses of Cape Colony and the 'antique' stores of Belgium and Holland have been ransacked by agents for good specimens of Dutch furniture and decoration. The result is charming; but, when all is said, it remains true that Groot Schuur, except in so far as its library is concerned, is pretty much what a well-to-do Dutchman—say a Cloete of Constantia—would have made his homestead in the days of the Dutch East India Company. And the entertainment is unostentatious as the accommodation. There is excellent plain food, with good wine, for everyone who cares to come and partake of them; but there is no display and no distinction between what at Oxford would be called 'guest-nights' and others, for, indeed, when the host is at Groot Schuur every day is a guest-day. The one departure from conventional rules is characteristic. The son of a country parson, accustomed in the old rectory to cold suppers after evening service on Sundays, Mr. Rhodes insists on making his Sunday dinners cold suppers. He has[2] no 'place' in England, nor does he care 'to cut a figure' in society; but when he is in England his hospitality is conducted on the same lines as it is at Groot Schuur.

[1] Mr. Rhodes' habitual cynicism of manner and speech has invested him in the minds of many of his critics with a hardness of heart which is impervious to human affection. No impression could be more radically erroneous. His love for Groot Schuur and its contents, to the collection of which he devoted years of trouble as well as vast sums of money, is proverbial. When it was burned down a friend began to break the news to him, by saying: 'I am afraid a terrible thing has happened.' 'What is that?' asked Mr. Rhodes hurriedly. 'Groot Schuur has been burned down,' was the reply. 'Thank God!' said Mr. Rhodes. 'I thought you were going to tell me that Jameson was dying.'

[2] See note at beginning of chapter.

I dwell, therefore, on this aspect of his private life, which otherwise had best have been taken for granted, not because it differentiates him from those of the same class of Englishmen as himself, but merely because it separates him from the category of those who have made money in South Africa, and with whom he is often classed. For the same reason I refer briefly to his private munificence. It is not well that a man or a man's friends should parade his acts of charity; but criticism in dealing with Mr. Rhodes has departed from most recognised rules, and the defence must be run on equally unconventional lines. Mr. Rhodes' name appears less frequently in the advertised lists of contributors to charitable objects than those of most of his co-millionaires. What I know of his munificence I have learned by accident; I have not had the impertinence to pry into his private concerns, nor has he volunteered me information on the point. But in the ordinary conversations at clubs and elsewhere one is constantly confronted with incidental illustrations of his kind-heartedness. There have come to my knowledge, without search on my part or premeditation on the part of my informants, the names of at least five young men who have at some time or other owed their University education to his beneficence. That this encouragement has not been given with any *arrière pensée* is curiously proved by the fact that, out of the five who owe him their higher training, two have become most bitter opponents of his policy. Personally I do not, and, though I have never asked him, I am sure that Mr. Rhodes does not, attribute this attitude of theirs to anything but a sincere conviction. Such patronage, in the old sense, would indeed be indistinguishable from feudalism in its most stringent interpretation, if assistance thus spontaneously proffered were interpreted by donor or recipient as constituting a perpetual obligation on the one towards the other. I quote these cases because, having learned them by accident, I am certain that they constitute but a small percentage of similar acts. In like circumstances I heard many instances of cognate generosity in different spheres of life. They have not been blazoned to the world, and they never will be, and they are mentioned

here solely as correctives of the ignorant or malignant impressions which have found currency.

The idea that a selfish regard for his own interests permeates all his actions, public and private, has taken colour from the autocratic way in which Mr. Rhodes is given to treating his subordinates. The comparison so often instituted between him and Napoleon (which had its origin, I suppose, in the facial resemblance of the two men) has never been extended to this side of his character. Among the many defects to which genius is liable, irritability and petulance seem the most common and the most persistent, and to read the scenes recorded between Napoleon and his underlings, civil and military, is to be often reminded of Mr. Rhodes. Himself maturing ideas with extraordinary rapidity, he is apt to be intolerant of the slower processes of the average mind, and, in like manner, not to accept his views as soon as they are formulated is to contradict them. Quick in temper as in mind, he expresses his differences of opinion with a candour which is naturally mistaken for acerbity. Yet I have rarely met a man who assimilates more readily such opinions honestly given by others, as are not in direct conflict with the principles by which he is guided. To the student of character it is amusing to note how frequently phrases and expressions used in argument with Mr. Rhodes, and apparently resented by him at the time, reappear, with a difference, in subsequent talk.

All strongly-marked characters have their inevitable correlatives. A good friend is generally a bad enemy, and Mr. Rhodes is an exceptionally good friend. He is charged with being vindictive, and he does not easily forget an injury; but whether we deem the resentment of wrong, real or supposed, vindictiveness, or acclaim it righteous indignation depends, as most of our judgments do, upon our attitude towards the person judged. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the less agreeable part of Mr. Rhodes' equipment—his impetuous haste, his quickness of temper, his careless indifference in the choice of expressions in argument—have had unfortunate consequences. For myself, I should be disposed to say that the man who is hurt by Mr. Rhodes' candour is an imbecile, and the man who quails before it is

a cur; but there are others, and those men entitled to much respect, who think differently.

Among the most respectable of mankind are those whose guiding principle in life is the maxim that there are two sides to every question. As a truism it is rather inadequate, for there are always twenty, or even a hundred, and a good practical rule in the workaday world is to deliberate as if every question had that hundred, and act as if they had but one. Those who try to act as they should deliberate generally find themselves in the position of the man who tries to sit upon two stools. The merits of both may be so evenly balanced that it is a matter of difficulty to decide on which you should ultimately settle, and if doubt be continued up to the moment when action becomes imperative, the result nine times in ten is that you will find yourself upon the floor. That is what is the matter with the men called 'mugwumps.' They are excellent counsellors, but bad arbiters. They can unfold you the advantages of every possible course, and proffer you objections unto all and several, but they cannot decide which you must take. In the library the mugwump has always been an object of admiration and respect, because he is the embodiment of moderation and fairness; but in the field of action he is ever a source of peril. As a rule of life, compromise is the resultant of two or more opposing forces, and the strength of each is weakened if the yielding spirit be at work within it ere it come into direct contact with its opposite. The moral is writ very large in history, where the man of action is admired, whether his conduct be applauded or condemned, and the man of argument, however respectable his motives, is disdained. And the mugwump's fate is generally Balaam's. His reasons, like his predisposition, are all on one side; but he is found dead on the field in reluctant protest for the cause of the other.

It is not, therefore, astonishing that the mugwump is the object of Mr. Rhodes' best and strongest aversion. When he has made his mind up as to his goal, he strikes for it without looking right or left. He has no sort of sympathy, not even patience, for the man who is constantly peering about for a loop-line with not so many pitfalls and stones of

stumbling as the straight and narrow way. And he has a contempt almost amounting to hatred for the man who is constantly gazing behind him to see what kind of spoor he has left on the ground he has already covered; he would say that, if Providence had intended us to look behind, Providence would have set our eyes in the back of our heads. The mugwump, however, has his revenge upon the man of resolute action. With the trail before us, it is so easy to point out where the pioneer has left the straight, and to show on a big map how much better some other course would have led to the unknown land. Thus, to earn the mugwump's condemnation is by way of being a serious matter for the man who works on big lines in Imperial politics. This 'unctuous rectitude'—to borrow a phrase of Mr. Rhodes which gave more offence than his participation in the Raid—is in its way a very formidable force, and the Psalmist evidently had it in his mind when he prayed that the precious ointments of the righteous might not break his head. To the purveyors of this most respectable moral salve Mr. Rhodes has always been an object of aversion, as, for the matter of that, were Clive and Hastings, to say nothing of Raleigh and Hawkins and Drake. The mugwump, who is not much given to enthusiasms, will yet wax eloquent over the magnificence and munificence of the British Empire; but he dare not whisper even to his conscience that, but for pirates like Drake and Hawkins and Raleigh, but for such eaters of land as Hastings and Clive and (last, and not least) Cecil Rhodes, there would have been very little British Empire to excite his respectable admiration.

First and last, Mr. Rhodes has been a great Imperial Englishman. It is the fashion to attribute to personal greed, or at least to personal ambition, the tremendous work he has done in the service of Empire. In the case of an individual, as well as in that of a nation, charity requires that, where two sets of motives—one laudable and the other contemptible—will equally account for a particular course of action, the higher, and not the lower, should be provisionally adopted. In Mr. Rhodes' case the opposite has always been the favourite course. I have often wondered if those whose aim in life is the imputation to Mr. Rhodes of the

lowest and the most sordid motives have ever taken the trouble to examine the opportunities he had for sacrificing an Imperial to a personal ambition. There is absolutely no question that he might have been the autocrat of an independent South Africa if he had so chosen. Not once, nor twice, but many times, he was taken to the top of the mountain, and shown that enormous Land of Promise, and told: 'All this shall be yours if you will abandon the Imperial flag and take service under the standard of an independent South Africa.'

So little is the inner history of the sub-continent known, that the name of a man who, next to Mr. Rhodes, was perhaps the most potent factor in South African politics will be absolutely unfamiliar to most readers of these pages. That name is Borckenhagen. Mr. Borckenhagen died in 1898, and his disappearance from this planet was, unless I am much mistaken, unchronicled by any English newspaper. Yet nowhere in the world had we a more persistent, a more formidable, or in many respects a more capable enemy. Mr. Borckenhagen was a German of that not uncommon type which regards every form of government, and especially that one under which he happens to live, with detestation. He settled at Bloemfontein, where he edited with remarkable ability a virulently anti-English paper called the *Express*, and perhaps no foreigner that ever lived had such a command of vitriolic English as he could call to his aid on every occasion. Messrs. Steyn and Reitz were brought up at the feet of this Gamaliel. He was a master of statecraft, and imbued his half-understanding disciples with some of his own skill. In Mr. Rhodes he saw either a most invaluable ally or a most formidable opponent, and with characteristic astuteness he endeavoured to win him over by pandering to that ambition which we are taught to believe is the ruling passion of Mr. Rhodes' life. Mr. Rhodes has often told the story himself, and it may be found among his published speeches, in one which he delivered at the Cape on March 12, 1898. Like all his public addresses, it conveys the impression of a man who is rather talking to himself than to his audience. Thinking aloud is a conspicuous characteristic of Mr. Rhodes, and is, it must be admitted, a rather dangerous habit:

I remember (he said[1]) that we had a great meeting at Bloemfontein,[2] and in the usual course I had to make a speech. I think I was your Prime Minister. And this speech pleased many there, and especially—and I speak of him with the greatest respect—a gentleman who is dead, Mr. Borckenhagen. He came to me and asked me to dictate to him the whole of my speech. I said, 'I never wrote a speech, and I don't know what I said, but I will tell you what I know about it.' He wrote it down, and afterwards came to Cape Town with me. . . . He spoke very nicely to me about my speech. 'Mr. Rhodes, we want a united South Africa.' And I said: 'So do I; I am with you entirely; we must have a united South Africa.' He said: 'There is nothing in the way.' And I said: 'No; there is nothing in the way. Well,' I said, 'we are one.' 'Yes,' he said, 'and I will tell you: we will take you as our leader,' he said. 'There is only one small thing, and that is, we must, of course, be independent to the rest of the world.' I said: 'No; you take me either for a rogue or a fool. I would be a rogue to forfeit all my history and traditions, and I would be a fool, because I would be hated by my own countrymen and mistrusted by yours.' From that day he assumed a most acrid tone in his *Express* towards myself, and I was made full sorry at times by the tone. But that was the overpowering thought in his mind—an independent South Africa.

Here is the key to a great political career. For consider the position: When Mr. Rhodes entered public life, it is no exaggeration to say that Great Britain had hardly a friend in South Africa. He took his seat in the Cape Parliament at the close of the year 1880, a year memorable in the annals of our Imperial history. The spring of it had witnessed the 'dishonest victory' which had crowned the Midlothian Campaign. Dishonest victories, like chickens and curses and violated pledges, come home to roost. It would be impossible to calculate the sacrifices in blood and treasure which we have been called upon to make, are still making, and shall yet have to make, in payment for Mr. Gladstone's final triumph. For years the country of Chatham, of Pitt, of Palmerston, rang the changes on apology, abandonment, scuttle, and nowhere had this reversal of Lord Beaconsfield's policy effects more permanently disastrous than in South Africa. Mr. Rhodes had not been in Parliament a year before the retrocession of the Transvaal was concluded in circumstances of unexampled ignominy. If the object of that surrender was the conciliation of Dutch goodwill, it signally failed in the achievement even of its humble purpose. As I have shown, so far from winning the grateful affection

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 533.
[2] It was on the occasion of the opening of the railway to Bloemfontein in 1890.

of the Boers and their kinsmen, it inspired them with contempt, and informed their wildest aspirations with a reasonable hope. The Transvaal insurgents at once appealed to 'our companions and fellow-countrymen in the Orange Free State,' the burghers of the Orange Free State, and bade them 'Come and help us. Consider our case. God rules and is with us. It is His will to unite us as a people, to make a united South Africa free from British authority.' Then came the surrender of Majuba, and soon after the creation of the Afrikander Bond came the discovery of gold on the Rand; the dry bones of what had been the skeleton in the cupboard of British South Africa were clothed with flesh and blood and sinews. As for the British colonists—betrayed, abandoned, and humiliated—their exasperation was such that, had there been a concerted movement for the establishment of an independent South Africa on the basis of equal rights for both races, very many would have joined it, and still more would have regarded it, as Mr. Morley tells us Danton regarded the Reign of Terror, 'with sombre acquiescence.' But our reputation had sunk so low that the Dutch Afrikanders would not be content with equality, but hoped and believed that Dutch ascendancy would be supreme.

It is a favourite device of Mr. Rhodes, in speculating on the line of action likely to be taken by a given individual, to strip him of what the logicians would call his personal accidents, and to study him as x. Potent as is the personal equation in most circumstances, it is curious to observe how often the actual policy of the given individual will coincide with that of the abstract x. If we consider Mr. Rhodes at the beginning of his public career as x—that is, as his enemies assert him to be, an unscrupulous intriguer, devoured by personal ambition, and indifferent to any consideration save that of looming large as the Colossus of South Africa—his course of action would have been very different from that pursued by the concrete Cecil John Rhodes. Whatever other charges have been brought against him, his bitterest enemy has never ventured to describe him as a fool; yet his policy, supposing him to have been a mere self-seeker, would have been a fool's indeed. In the early eighties, as I have pointed

out, the attitude of the British colonists to the Imperial Government was one of sullen alienation. They owed it nothing for services rendered in the past, and experience, if it taught them anything, fostered the belief that the utmost they could expect of it was encouragement to make sacrifices, to incur the enmity of their Dutch neighbours, and then to be thrown over. Less than that had sufficed to break the tie between the American colonies and the mother-country. If we could imagine the Government of George III. inviting the American colonists to risk their lives and fortunes in a struggle with the French while the latter were still in possession of Canada, and then informing them that the struggle was touched with blood-guiltiness, and that they must make the best terms with their foes they could, it is quite certain that the War of Independence would have been antedated. Had Mr. Rhodes chosen to take advantage of the prevailing exasperation and despair when he took his seat in the Cape Parliament, the path to personal eminence would have been short and easy. Nothing could have been simpler for an astute Englishman than welding the discontent of the British element with the rising courage of the Dutch Afrikander. There were those, no doubt, among the latter who cherished a sentimental attachment for the old Dutch flag, as among the former there were those who, in spite of all their grievances, would have parted with the Union Jack with something more than a pang of regret. But these considerations could easily have been squared in presence of an independent South Africa. At that time, too, the average Afrikander might well have held the danger of foreign appropriation to be exceedingly remote. The mineral wealth of the country was known to none, and suspected only by a few; while the scramble for the continent had not yet started, and to most foreign statesmen the lands south of the Zambesi presented themselves as a barren, waterless waste, inhabited by savage and intractable races, whose subjugation had caused Great Britain many millions sterling, and by a heterogeneous combination of whites only less savage and less intractable than they. Moreover, the Afrikander might well have convinced himself that, indifferent as the Imperial Government was to its South African possessions, it could

not, and would not, part with that halfway house to India provided in Cape Town and Simons Bay, so that an independent federation might have counted with absolute certainty upon the protection of Great Britain against invasion from the sea. Then, the Orange Free State and the newly-restored South African Republic presented little difficulty. Mr. Brand, President of the first, was not averse from federation, even under the British flag. He would have co-operated with a whole heart in the creation of an independent union. As for Mr. Kruger, whatever his personal aspirations (and it must be remembered that he had not as yet fallen into the hands of the scheming Hollanders who finally worked his ruin), it is certain that the vast majority of his burghers, who asked nothing better than to be left alone and pay no taxes, would have hailed with enthusiasm a policy which promised them eternal relief from the interference of the half-dreaded, half-despised rooineks. Nor is there the slightest reason to believe that at that time the Imperial Government would have seriously opposed the severance of the link between the mother-country and the colony had it been seriously pressed by British and Dutch alike. Mr. Rhodes, therefore, to gratify the ambitions with which he has been carefully credited, had only to come to terms with the two Presidents and with the leaders of the Cape Colony Dutch.

But as early as 1878—long before his name was known outside of Kimberley—he had dreamed a far other dream than that of being the head of a third-rate Republic south of the equator. It was in that year he spoke after this wise to Dr. Jameson, with whom he then established a life-long friendship: 'I mean to have the whole unmarked country north of the colony for England. And I know I can get it, and develop it at present only by the co-operation of the Cape Dutch colonists, and I am perfectly willing to pay the price.' This revelation of his early ambition should of itself suffice to dispel the idea that he was at any time false to the Imperial creed; for in determining to secure the unmarked and unexplored country westward and north of the Republics 'for England,' he deliberately multiplied the obstacles in his way. The expansion of an independent South Africa

would have met with no opposition, but rather with encouragement, from the rulers and burghers of the two Republics; but every conceivable difficulty was raised in the way of opening up the north to British enterprise, and was due to the natural apprehension of the Transvaalers, that their country would be, as it ultimately was, shut in on all sides by British territory. In the admission to Dr. Jameson, 'I know I can get it, and develop it at present only by the co-operation of the Cape Dutch colonists,' we have the clue to Mr. Rhodes' earlier policy. He believed, as he had every reason to believe, that England was indifferent to Empire, and worse than indifferent to schemes of expansion for expansion's sake, which it regarded as costly and profitless luxuries. He was bent, however, on creating a great British dependency, which should extend northward until further advance was checked by some insurmountable barrier. If the British Government insisted, as he knew it would insist, upon discountenancing the scheme, his sole means consisted in the co-operation of Cape Colony. Already the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley had opened the eyes of the inhabitants of an otherwise poor colony to the fact that wealth and prosperity must reach them from the north.

The English party, such as it was, had been hopelessly divided from the time that Mr. Gladstone's accession to power had destroyed the natural bond of union—devotion to the Imperial cause. No help was to be expected therefrom, so Mr. Rhodes, therefore, bethought him of the Dutch. If he succeeded, a twofold advantage would be his: in the first place he would have what he wanted, a free hand for the development of his scheme; and in the second he would divert Dutch sympathies from the ideals and attainments visioned by the Bond. It has been said that he sold himself to Mr. Hofmeyr. No expression could less accurately describe the nature of the bargain concluded between the two. Mr. Hofmeyr was a pure Afrikander. He was Dutch by the accident that that section of the Afrikanders to which he belonged spoke the Dutch tongue and were members of the Dutch Reformed Church. Originally, at any rate, he entertained no feeling of hostility against

the paramount Power; on the contrary, he was shrewd enough, and conversant enough with world-politics, to know that the fairest opportunity for achieving his 'Africa for the Afrikanders' was to be found under the easy yoke of the British Empire. For him, then, the expression, since wrested to quite other uses, meant the protection of the Dutch agricultural interests against the policy of Free Trade, with which the influx of Englishmen threatened South Africa, together with security for the Dutch to work out salvation in their indolent, conservative, and unprogressive way—in a word, a permanent and rigid check upon those ideas of advance and change which the Anglo-Norman carries with him whithersoever he goes. A year or so before Mr. Rhodes entered the political arena, Mr. Hofmeyr had established the Farmers' Association, whose object was simply and exclusively the protection of the agricultural interest. Of its essence, it was commercial and economical; but, as the lines of demarcation between Protectionist and Free Trader coincided with those between the country and the town—in other words, between the Dutch and the British—the inevitable division, from economic, became racial and political. There can be little doubt that it was largely owing to Mr. Rhodes' influence that in 1883 Mr. Hofmeyr accomplished that fusion of the association with the Bond which resulted from the violent anti-English feeling manifested in 1880 and 1881. The new Bond, like all similar combinations, partook of the character of both its parents. The Farmers' Association element grew more political, while the old Bond thrust its more truculent racial antipathies into the background, and thus reconstituted the thing became what it has ever since been, the most potent factor in South African politics. At the time there were those who foresaw the dangers with which it menaced the Imperial supremacy; for the *Cape Times* published the article. I have already said that this article was the handiwork of Mr. Basil Worsfold, whose authority on South African questious is justified by the insight he displayed nearly twenty years ago, which applied to the reformed Bond the legend of the ungrateful camel. The article attracted very general attention, and, though the analogue

it set forth was repudiated by the Bond, it has proved true to an extent which has probably astonished Mr. Worsfold himself. Now, the ultimate danger to British supremacy from an organization founded almost entirely on racial lines was not plain to Mr. Rhodes, or was ignored by him; or, what is still more probable, he saw the risk and 'chanced' it. In the compact concluded between him and Mr. Hofmeyr, there was, however, nothing discreditable, and nothing which was in the least inconsistent with the known aspirations of either of the parties. Each had something to give which the other could accept without any sacrifice of principle. Mr. Hofmeyr was, before all else, anxious to secure the protection of the agricultural interest. To him Free Trade meant something more than a fall in prices: it involved a constantly-increasing stream of immigration which threatened (as Mr. Kruger was destined to say in later years) to swamp the old Dutch burghers, and in Cape Colony to destroy that exclusive isolation which was the only atmosphere in which the Dutch traditions, language, laws, and customs thrived; and on this point Mr. Rhodes was largely in sympathy.

He has been called a Radical; but, if he at all deserve the name, he is a Radical with Cromwell and Carlyle. Inherited instincts perhaps accounted for his preferring the owner and tiller of the soil before the manufacturer, and it is significant that, in that strange pantheon for African worthies to which he proposes to adapt the site he has chosen for his own sepulchre, he has made it a condition of interment there that no man shall receive the honour unless it have been decreed to him by a vote of two-thirds of the land-owners in South Africa. Outside politics, he has always entertained a genuine sympathy and respect for the colonists of the old Dutch and Franco-Dutch stock. He likes their tenacity, their rugged independence, their courtly manners; and when he Dutchified his residence in Cape Town, changed it back from the Priory to Groot Schuur, and beautified it with the massive and splendid simplicity of Dutch furniture, he was gratifying an inclination as well as achieving a touch of policy. The respect and affection are reciprocal, and, in spite of all the wire-

pullers of the Bond and their English dupes may say, he is still more popular with the Dutch colonists than any other Englishman has ever been.

It was natural, therefore, that Mr. Rhodes should feel no difficulty in supporting Mr. Hofmeyr's Protectionist legislation as a return for the Bond leader's assistance in carrying out his great schemes in the North. Mr. Hofmeyr, on his side, found his part of the bargain rather more difficult to fulfil. For reasons which I shall give presently, he could have no doubt as to Mr. Rhodes' devotion to the Imperial connection; he was fully alive to Mr. Kruger's extreme anxiety to bar the way to the North, which the missionaries, Livingstone and Moffat, had done so much to keep open. None knew better than he the strength of the tie between the Transvaal Dutch to their kinsmen in Cape Colony, and it is more than likely that, with all his great personal influence, he would have failed to bring over the Bond to Mr. Rhodes, but for the selfishness displayed by Mr. Kruger in his effort after absolute independence. On advice from the Hollanders whom he had imported, that astute Dopper perceived that the one chance the South African Republic had of taking its place amongst the sovereign nations of the world consisted in the organization of direct access to the sea. Practically, there was but one way open—that by Delagoa Bay; and to secure this outlet Mr. Kruger was prepared to sacrifice the material interests of his Dutch kinsmen in Cape Colony. They had realized, especially after the establishment of Kimberley, that it was to the trade from the North that they must look for their revenue, and this trade Mr. Kruger was quite prepared to cut off. And so it came to pass that difficulties, which might otherwise have proved insurmountable by Mr. Hofmeyr, were smoothed away by the action of President Kruger himself. Indeed, there have been times, not remote, when the Cape Dutch would readily have combined with the Imperial Government to fight their brethren across the Vaal for the sake of the loaves and fishes; so that two motives on the Dutch side combined to render an alliance with Mr. Rhodes not only possible, but desirable. There was, first, the support he could lend to their domestic policy, and there was, secondly, the fact that

Mr. Kruger's policy was one that Mr. Rhodes had pledged himself to thwart.

Mr. Rhodes' position was quite unambiguous. In the first place, he never wavered in his recognition of his duties as a member of the British Empire; in the second, it was the aim of his endeavour, subject always to the former consideration, to make Cape Colony, with the assistance of the Dutch, the dominant factor in South Africa. Both these guiding principles must be kept in mind in judging his policy up to the time immediately preceding the Raid. In almost his first utterance delivered in the Cape Assembly,[1] speaking on the proposal to disarm the Basutos, he said:

> For myself, I would have accepted the position of leaving the settlement of affairs to the mother-country; but when I say that I do not mean that the mother-country should have the settlement and this country the responsibilities. . . . Look at it on practical grounds. Are we a great and independent South Africa? No; we are only the population of a third-rate English city spread over a great country.

In these words lie the germs of his policy, and they are developed in his next important speech in the Assembly two years later:[2] 'I believe in a United States of South Africa, but as a portion of the British Empire.'

How closely what I have described as 'guiding principles' were associated in his mind may be gathered from a further extract from the same speech:

> We have heard so much about the Free State and so much about the Transvaal that I begin to think it is just time to think of the interests of the Cape Colony. By an accident of birth I was not born in this country; but that is nothing. I have adopted the colony as my home, and in reference to the affairs of this country, I look upon the interests of the Cape Colony first, and those of the neighbouring States second. While sympathizing with the Transvaal, I think that the Transvaal should return something of that feeling of sympathy to this colony instead of shutting out our industry by leasing everything to foreigners, ten, twenty, and thirty years. At Kimberley your Transvaal trade is ruined by being shut out through foreign monopolies. . . . I have my own views as to the future of South Africa, and I believe in a United States of South Africa, but as a portion of the British Empire. I believe that confederated States in a colony under responsible government would each be practically an independent Republic, but I think we should also have all the privileges of the tie with the Empire.

And then followed some words of which the significance

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 32, April 25, 1881. His maiden speech was made on April 19.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 44 *et seq.*

could hardly be appreciated until to-day: 'Possibly[1] there is not a very great divergence between myself and the honourable member for Stellenbosch (Mr. Hofmeyr), *excepting always the question of the flag*.' It has been the fashion of late to paint Mr. Hofmeyr as a consistent Imperialist, and to quote as a comparative proof his elimination from the Bond constitution of the words demanding a separate flag for an independent South Africa; but it is wholly impossible to reconcile a belief in his Imperialism with the words which I have emphasized. It is inconceivable that Mr. Rhodes, who was anxious for his support, should have deliberately called attention to the one point of difference between them, unless that difference was notorious. A few days later Mr. Rhodes warned Cape Colony that 'unless we do something we shall have our trade with the interior removed first to Natal, and then to Delagoa Bay, owing to the prohibitive tariff of the Transvaal.' And a fortnight later still[2] he elaborated more fully these concurrent ideas:

> I look upon this Bechuanaland territory as the Suez Canal of trade of this country, the key of its road to the interior. The House will have to wake up to what is to be its future policy. The question before us really is this: Whether this colony is to be confined to its present borders, or whether it is to become the dominant State in South Africa—whether, in fact, it is to spread its civilization over the interior.

Then followed a passage containing a phrase of which the most unscrupulous use has been made to depreciate the speaker in the estimation of his countrymen:

> If we do not settle this (the Stellaland Question) ourselves, we shall see it taken up in the House of Commons on one side or the other, not from any real interest in the question, but simply because of its consequence to those occupying the Ministerial benches. We want to get rid of the Imperial factor[3] in this question, and to deal with it ourselves

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 52. [2] *Ibid.*, 62.

[3] Sir Hercules Robinson, in his speech at the farewell banquet given to him at the close of his first governorship, April 27, 1889, used the phrase in exactly the same sense as that in which it had been employed by Mr. Rhodes: 'There are three competing influences at work in South Africa; they are Colonialism, Republicanism, and Imperialism. As to the last, it is a diminishing quantity, there being now no permanent place in South Africa for Imperial control on a large scale. With responsible government in the Cape, and Natal soon likely to attain that status, with the independent Republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, and with Germany on the west coast and Portugal on the east, the idea of the permanent presence of the Imperial factory in the interior, of a South African India in the Kalahari, is simply an absurdity; there being no longer any permanent place in South Africa for direct Imperial rule, it is to be viewed simply as an aid to colonial expansion.'

jointly, with the Transvaal. . . . Of course, we must not disregard any legitimate interests of the Transvaal, but we are bound to think first of the interests of this colony. . . . I respect the Transvaal, but, as politicians, we have to look to our position as the future paramount State in South Africa, and we see, therefore, that any settlement must be made jointly with the Cape Colony, which must retain the trade of the interior and must remain the dominant State in South Africa. . . . As to the effect of this question on general South African affairs, I would say that I perceive the high aim of much that has been said by Mr. Hofmeyr. His aspirations are for the union of South Africa. The question of the union of South Africa is bound up in this Bechuanaland Question, but I regard this question first in its consequences to the interests of the Cape Colony. . . . I solemnly warn this House that, if it departs from the control of the interior, we shall fall from the position of the paramount State in South Africa, which is our right in every scheme of federal union in the future, to that of a minor State.

To none of his hearers could there have been any doubt as to what he meant by the elimination of the Imperial factor. His idea of the future of the British Empire was that it should consist of a union of States confederated for mutual protection, and for the furtherance by commercial intercourse of the material prosperity of the whole and of the parts. As a condition precedent to the realization of this dream, he held that each part should be altogether free to deal with all such local problems as did not raise the question of Imperial safety. As will be seen, it was this idea which prompted another much-misrepresented action of his—his contribution to the Home Rule fund of Mr. Parnell. His desire to eliminate the Imperial factor was not only not directed against the expansion and consolidation of the Empire, but was in his judgment calculated to promote them. Autonomy in local business, co-operation in high Imperial policy—these were the secrets, as he conceived them, of successful development. So much was this expression canvassed and misrepresented, that four years later[1] Mr. Rhodes was moved to explain it:

Look at my honourable self. Why, I once spoke of eliminating the Imperial factor. Now, will the House allow me to say what I meant by that expression? What I meant was that, if Bechuanaland was to be occupied by Boers, it could not stand direct Imperial government. When I went home I was regarded as a most horrid individual. . . . I myself have been burned in effigy in colonial towns, and what for? For trying to defend English interests in South Africa. I have great respect for the Dutch party for one simple reason: I fought it upon the question of expansion to the interior, but they have borne me no enmity

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

for it, although I attained my object. . . . For myself, I tell the Bond: 'If I cannot keep my position in the country as an Englishman on the European vote, I wish to be cleared out, for I am not going to the native vote for support.' Now the honourable members (the Dutch) shall see the whole of my views. I do not trust the honourable gentlemen implicitly, but I hope they do not distrust me for the reasons I once heard a Dutch elector express—'that in the first place I was too young, and in the second I looked so damnably like an Englishman.' I am aware that such feelings do exist in South Africa. . . . The President of the Transvaal has looked for assistance to the Free State in preference to us, whom he regards as foreigners, and he has deprived us of the franchise; but time will alter that opinion, and we shall share that franchise, and then he will invite the assistance of the colony in a system of governing these enormous mining populations. Let us then at once clear away this native question; it stands between us and the other States of South Africa. . . . It is as if I were a little sailing-boat on Table Bay, and knew exactly what port I am aiming for. I know exactly what I am after. . . . I have weighed what I think South African politics are, and I have decided on the course I will pursue.

There were, however, some questions of internal policy with regard to which Mr. Rhodes was not prepared to sacrifice his principles, even to secure the adherence of the Afrikander Bond. One instance, perhaps, deserves especial notice, because another common charge against Mr. Rhodes is that of indifference to the welfare of the natives. It is rendered more preposterous by the fact that it is put forward in the name of those who, quite sincerely and, as they believe, with Divine authority, regard the Kaffirs as a race created for the use of man, like the horse or the dog. All parties are agreed, however great the divergence between their views as to the merits of the present struggle, that the greatest injury which can be done to the native is to give him facilities for getting drunk when he pleases. On this point the Aborigines Protection Society is at one with the most militant Jingo. In South Africa, however, the Dutch farmers, as the purveyors of a most devilish distillation (known as 'Cape smoke'), have ever been anxious that, given the freedom to be drunk, the Kaffir should have no other form of freedom left. The Liquor License Bill of 1883 was fiercely opposed by the farmers of the Bond, with Mr. Hofmeyr at their head. On that occasion[1] Mr. Rhodes said:

Many members have spoken in a rapturous manner of the rights of

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

the black man, but I have always held a different position from that which has been advanced to-day. The views of Mr. Hofmeyr are extraordinary. I can tell him that the poor coloured man in Kimberley is only anxious that he should be deprived of the chance of drinking. The coloured man does not want these privileges you are so anxious to give him; he does want some other privileges, which, perhaps, the House would not be so ready to grant him. . . . Every member who represents wine-growing districts is fully aware of what this legislation means—the stoppage of drinking. As a proof of which I may say that the wine merchants in town have refused lately to purchase 'Cape smoke,' because they know, if this Amendment passes, the sale of it at Kimberley will be damaged. Wine farmers, too, know that the Amendment, if passed, will be successful in hampering their trade. I say that our duty is to stop the trade, although the effect may be injurious to some Western farmers. On this trade depends the morality of the natives. Every employer in Kimberley desires to see this practice of drinking stamped out.

Those who know the inwardness of South African politics will realize that here was such a speech as, delivered by an English Minister, would rouse the fiercest antagonism of every brewer, wine merchant, and licensed victualler in the kingdom; and the Minister who, courting the support of a party in which these interests were most largely represented, would yet proffer such a challenge is not to be found in Britain. If any form of slander could astonish those who know their South Africa, it would be that which makes of Kimberley a quarry for stones to hurl at Mr. Rhodes. It is true that drunkenness and debauchery prevailed amongst the natives employed in the diamond-mines; it is true that, contrary to the letter and spirit of the Conventions, arms were sold to natives, or trafficked to natives in lieu of wages, to the amazement and indignation of the Boers of the two Republics. But it is equally true, though, your hot-gospeller being nothing if not forgetful, it is rarely mentioned, that these things occurred in the old bad days of competition among mining companies, and ceased entirely and for ever from the day on which Mr. Rhodes succeeded in that immense amalgamation of conflicting interests known to the world as De Beers Consolidated; so that attacking him for their existence is pretty much the same as, say, attacking Lord Romilly for the savagery of our Penal Code as it was before he began his work of mercy and reform.

The speeches of public men, cited as evidence of motives, must always be accepted subject to a consideration of the circumstances in which they were made. The most upright,

addressing a meeting of partisans, rarely can, and still more rarely does, state the whole truth as it presents itself to his mind. In the nature of things he glosses over the unpalatable, and emphasizes what he knows to be agreeable to the majority of those who listen to him. Many speeches of Mr. Rhodes were delivered in the presence of a body of men whose support he was anxious to secure; yet he did not disguise from them opinions which, he knew, ran counter to their tradition and prejudice as well as to their racial sympathy. Nothing can be more clear than that his policy was dictated by a desire to extend British supremacy as far North as it was possible to carry it. This extension did not then involve an interference with the independence of the Republics as defined in the Conventions, or any restriction of their local autonomy. He thought it possible to level up the British colonies to the two Republics. He believed that it was possible to form a union of the States and colonies of South Africa, which should be as free from the interference of the Imperial factor as Canada and Australia were, but which should be at least as ready as they to uphold the interests of Greater Britain, to contribute to its burdens, and to take part in its defence whensoever and wheresoever it might be attacked. He may have miscalculated the strength of two of the most important factors in the problem—his hold over the Afrikander party, and the extent of their influence over their kinsmen in the Transvaal. It is not, however, miscalculation which has been imputed to him for a fault, but a policy deliberately indifferent, if not reasonably hostile, to the interests of the mother-country; and this a few extracts from his speeches will prove conclusively that he never entertained. In the words of his Dutch critic, he 'looked too damnably like an Englishman' for that.

What other statesman, given a House quite eaten up with Afrikanderism, would have claimed of it a sympathetic hearing for the frank avowal (July 23, 1888)?[1]

I am fully persuaded that honourable members feel now that they are Cape Colonists first, and that their consideration for the Transvaal is a secondary matter. . . . Remember, there are three possible

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 200.

methods—direct Imperial government, Colonial expansion, and Republicanism. . . .

I do not think any honourable members should consider this question as one of our being dictated to by the Transvaal. When they think of what that man Paul Kruger has lost in his efforts to realize his dream of a republic for his people and his people alone! I regard him as one of the most remarkable men in South Africa, who has been singularly unfortunate. When I remember that Paul Kruger had not a sixpence in his treasury when his object was to extend his country over the whole of the northern interior, when I see him sitting in Pretoria with Bechuanaland gone and other lands round him gone from his grasp, and, last of all, when he, with his whole idea of a pastoral Republic, finds that idea vanishing, and that he is likely to have to deal with 100,000 diggers, who must be entirely out of sympathy and touch with him, I pity the man. When I see a man starting and continuing with one object, and utterly failing in that object, I cannot help pitying him. I know very well that he has been willing to sacrifice anything to gain that object of his. If you think it out, it has been a most remarkable thing that, not content with recovering his country, he wished to obtain the whole interior for a population of his own, and he has been defeated in his object. I will inform the House what is his present position. Can you conceive a worse one? There is a small farming population, and a larger mining population pouring in, and in order to stem that torrent the most extraordinary plan must be devised. The position is impossible under the rule of a Republic; it is practically impossible under the rule of any other Government, but more especially impossible under a Republic The gentleman to whom I refer, who at present is in charge of the Transvaal, has to devise a scheme by which he is to benefit the Transvaal by the disregard of the major portion of his population. If there is a point I might urge upon him, I would say that he has devised the most extraordinary situation; that in the administration of his country no South African need apply. He has devised a scheme of taking his whole official administration from an older country. He has actually made an administrative scheme the essence of which is that no South African may have a part in it. I ask you to think upon these facts, and, if there are any members of the House who are influenced by them, they will understand the course I have pursued as regards the complaints that the Transvaal dictates too much. Altogether, so far as the Transvaal is concerned, there is no reason for envy, but rather for commiseration.

It was an essential part of the policy which he had marked out—a policy conceived long before the gold discoveries changed the complexion of the South African Problem—to keep before the eyes of the colonists, the Dutch even more than the English, the prospect of a united South Africa, in which Cape Colony should be the dominant factor. It was a sage policy, and, but for the altered conditions of the Transvaal, it was a practical policy; and no one can allege that it was anything but an Imperial policy. Most politicians, anxious to conciliate the goodwill of electors of alien origin, would have kept the question of 'the Flag' as much as possible in the background. Mr. Rhodes, on the contrary,

never omitted to proclaim his devotion to 'the flag I have been born under and the flag I represent.'[1] Nowhere, perhaps, was this sentiment more clearly and courageously expressed than in his speech at the Annual Congress of the Bond at Kimberley on March 13, 1891. It was characteristic of him that, in proposing the toast of the Bond, he should talk to members thus:[2]

It would in the past have been considered an extraordinary anomaly that one who possessed the complete confidence of Her Majesty herself should have been able to show that at the same time he felt most completely and entirely that the object and aspirations of the Afrikander Bond were in complete touch and concert with a fervent loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. . . . We have made distinction in the past in reference to the neighbouring States, and if I had my wish I would abolish that system of independent States antagonistic to ourselves south of the Zambesi. . . . We know these States (*i.e.*, the Republics) have been created; they have caused enormous and terrible difficulties in connection with our mutual relations, and I recognise that the Afrikander Bond's policy is to remove these difficulties and obstructions from the way of union. I felt nine years ago as a young politician that there was no difference between my ideas and the ideas which your organization promulgated. I might say there is no difference between the policy of Sir Bartle Frere and the policy of the Afrikander Bond. If that had been stated at the time Sir Bartle Frere was Governor of the Cape Colony, it would almost have been met with laughter,[3] but now you receive the statement in all seriousness, recognising its truth. People are beginning to see that this is the grand central idea. Although there may be two different ways of working it out, the object is the same.

There was to be more divergence between these two ways than Mr. Rhodes or, for the matter of that, any of his audience anticipated in 1891. Rivalry was impossible between the flags until the mineral wealth of the Transvaal gave the Dutch Afrikanders the means of setting the Vierkleur against the Union Jack. The concurrent ideas of Imperial supremacy and local autonomy coloured the peroration of a discourse as remarkable for its candour as it was by reason of the audience to which it was addressed:[4]

Let us accept jointly the idea that the most complete internal self-government is what we are both aiming at; that self-government means that in every question in connection with this country we shall decide, and we alone. I think that proposition will meet your views. If you desire the cordial and intense co-operation of the English section of this country,

[1] Cape Town, January 6, 1894.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 265.

[3] The Afrikander Bond was not started until after Sir Bartle Frere left South Africa, but Mr. Rhodes, of course, was referring to the Afrikander movement which resulted in the creation of the Bond.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 352.

let us unite and be of one mind on this question of self-government. Remember that we have been trained at home; we have our history and our nation to look back upon, and we believe that, with your help, it is possible to obtain that union, fulfilling in every respect your ideas of self-government, and yet you will not be asking us to forfeit our full loyalty and feeling of devotion for the mother-country.

In many respects, indeed, Mr. Rhodes was *plus royaliste que le roi*. He was more Imperialistic than the Empire-rulers in Downing Street. In a speech on January 18, 1895, while still Prime Minister by the grace of the Bond. Mr. Rhodes thus enlightened the shareholders of the Chartered Company:

A proposal came from home that I should put in words (in the charter) to the effect that the duty on imported goods should not exceed the present Cape tariff. . . . I objected to the introduction of the words 'imported goods,' and wished them to be 'British goods,' because England in future might adopt this policy and yet have a clause in the Constitution of one of her colonies which prevented it. . . . If you carry that clause in the Constitution of Matabeleland you do not know how it will spread, the basis being that your goods shall not be shut out from the markets of the world. That clause will extend from Matabeleland to Mashonaland, throughout Africa, and then perhaps Australia and Canada may consider the question. You will be retaining a market for your goods. You have been actually offered this, but have refused it because you did not understand it.[1]

I have quoted very largely from speeches before the Raid, partly because an understanding of the speaker's policy is essential to a grasp of the situation as it presented itself to Lord Milner, but chiefly because an utterly erroneous belief has been currently fostered that Mr. Rhodes' Imperialism was a post-Raid manœuvre. It is alleged, even by respectable Imperialists, that Mr. Rhodes had eliminated the Imperial factor to gratify the Bond, and that, when the Raid had alienated the Bond, he fell back in despair upon the despised and rejected Imperial factor. That this idea is utterly false, the foregoing extracts, which might be multiplied indefinitely, will prove.

[1] Mr. Rhodes' proposal that British goods should never pay a higher import duty than that current at the Cape (7½ per cent. *ad valorem*) when he made the speech (January, 1895), would have fixed what is known as the upper limit of duties on the products of British industry, however high, for revenue or other purposes, the tariff may have been raised on other imported goods. Lord Rosebery's Government in its wisdom, which was that of the Cobden Club, refused the offer, unclogged by conditions, as being inconsistent with the abstract principles of Free Trade. Unnoted, however, in the turmoil and excitement of the war, the clause has been inserted in an amended version of the charter.

Perhaps the most sinister misinterpretation of Mr. Rhodes' motives and actions is to be found in the unscrupulous use which has been made of his contribution to the Home Rule Fund. I may be permitted to say in parenthesis that I have always been a persistent, and even a passionate, opponent of the Gladstonian policy of Home Rule. My own objections to that policy were based upon no dislike for the expedient of local autonomy as a means of relieving the Imperial Parliament of a set of duties which it was physically and intellectually incapable of discharging. It is a law of Nature that consolidation and decentralization should progress *pari passu.* Mr. Herbert Spencer has stated the law and its operations in the introduction to that 'System of Philosophy' which, whatever else be said of it, is the grandest and most comprehensive explanation of the theory of 'the nature of things' ever presented to the world. I need only quote one illustrative passage:[1]

> I believe it has been shown beyond question that that which the German physiologists have found to be a law of organic development is the law of all development. The advance from the simple to the complex through a process of successive differentiations is seen alike in the earliest changes of the universe to which we can reason our way back, and in the earliest changes which we can inductively establish. It is seen in the geologic and climatic evolution of the earth, and of every single organism on its surface; it is seen in the evolution of humanity, whether contemplated in the civilized individual or in the aggregation of races; it is seen in the evolution of society in respect alike of its political, its religious, and its economical organization; and it is seen in the evolution of all those endless concrete and abstract products of human activity which constitute the environment of our daily life. From the remotest past which science can fathom, up to the novelties of yesterday, an essential trait of evolution has been the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous.

Translated into the language of practical politics, the law of evolution becomes the art of devolution. Without devolution of powers to deal with local needs and conditions, there can be no such thing as Imperial Federation. Imperial Federation, with devolved authority upon the component parts of the Empire, means, in a sense which it would be out of place to elaborate here, 'Home Rule all round.' My objection to Mr. Gladstone's policy was that it was not the realization of a great principle, but a concession to terrorism and intimidation, and would, by the very nature of its origin,

[1] 'First Principles,' third edition, p. 359.

have transferred vast powers to men who were manifestly incapable of consulting and fostering the best interests either of the whole or of the parts. Mr. Rhodes, however, 6,000 miles away, realized the Imperial importance of the principle long before its partial application by Mr. Gladstone as a matter of party tactics; and Mr. Rhodes very naturally underestimated the local and, what perhaps may prove to be a temporary, objection to Home Rule as formulated in most unpropitious circumstances by Mr. Parnell. It is in keeping with the systematic misrepresentations of his motives, which had its origin long before the Raid, that his support of Parnell should have been attributed solely to his care for self. It has been alleged, for instance, even, if I mistake not, by an organ usually so fair as the *Spectator*, that the object of his contribution was to disarm Nationalist opposition to the grant of a charter to the British South African Company. A consideration of dates, the sole infallible witnesses, will demonstrate the utter futility of this ungenerous imputation. The date of the letter[1] in which Mr. Rhodes announced to Mr. Parnell his intention of contributing £10,000 to the funds of the Irish party is June 19, 1888, and the letter alludes in its opening sentence to conversations on the subject of Home Rule held with Mr. Swift MacNeill during the previous autumn.[2] Now, at the date of this letter, not only had Mr. Rhodes not applied for a charter for the British South Africa Company, but that company was not even in existence. It was not till October, 1888, that Lobengula granted a full concession of all mining rights within his dominions to Messrs. C. D. Rudd, Rochfort Maguire, and F. R. Thompson, and it was not till 1889 that any charter was asked by the company which had absorbed the gold-fields of the South Africa Company, the General Search Association, and the United Concessions

[1] The whole correspondence will be found as an appendix to 'Cecil Rhodes: His Political Life and Speeches,' from which I have already quoted so much.

[2] The letter, which is addressed from the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, June 19, 1888, opens as follows: 'On my way to the Cape last autumn I had the opportunity of frequent conversations with Mr. Swift MacNeill upon the subject of Home Rule for Ireland. I then told him that I had long had sympathy with the Irish demand for self-government, but there were certain portions of Mr. Gladstone's Bill which appeared open to the gravest objections.' The nature of these objections will be seen further on.

Company. The charter itself was actually granted on October 15 of that year.

Mr. Rhodes makes it quite clear in his letter that it was not the specific grievances alleged by the Irish as the basis of their demand for Home Rule, not even the 'blackguardism' of Pitt, in carrying the Act of Union, which induced him to support the Irish movement. The belief in Imperial unity plus local autonomy permeates his correspondence with Parnell, as it gave the tone to the speeches which I have already largely quoted. After discussing the difficulties connected with the retention of the Irish members at Westminster, and of the anomaly which would be created by granting to them the right to vote on purely English matters, while matters exclusively Irish were withdrawn from the purview of English representatives, Mr. Rhodes continues:

> I will frankly add that my interest in the Irish Question has been heightened by the fact that in it I see the possibility of the commencement of changes which will eventually mould and weld together all parts of the British Empire.

Strange language this for an earnest recruit to the ranks then 'marching through rapine to dismemberment'!

> The English (he says) are a conservative people, and like to move slowly and, as it were, experimentally. At present there can be no doubt that the time of Parliament is overcrowded with the discussion of trivial and local affairs. Imperial matters have to stand their chance of a hearing alongside of Railway and Tram Bills. Evidently it must be a function of modern legislation to delegate an enormous number of questions which now occupy the time of Parliament to district councils or local bodies. . . . But side by side with the tendency of decentralization of local affairs there is growing up a feeling for the necessity of greater union in Imperial matters. The primary tie which binds our Empire together is the national one of self-defence. The colonies are already commencing to co-operate with, and contribute to, the mother-country for this purpose. But if they are to contribute permanently and beneficially, they will have to be represented in the Imperial Parliament, where the disposition of their contributions must be decided upon.[1]

[1] It is interesting to observe that the above paragraph might have been taken bodily from a passage in the 'Wealth of Nations,' published when the only colonies which Great Britain had were those in North America, shortly (by her own folly) to be lost to her:

'There is not the least probability that the British Constitution would be hurt by the union of Great Britain with her colonies. That Constitution, on the contrary, would be completed by it, and seems to be imperfect without it. The Assembly which deliberates and decides concerning the affairs of every part of the Empire, in order to be properly informed, ought certainly to have representatives from every part of it. That this union, however, could be easily effectuated, or

I do not think (adds Mr. Rhodes) that it can be denied that the presence of two or three Australian members in the House would in recent years have prevented much misunderstanding upon such questions as the New Hebrides, New Guinea, and Chinese Immigration. Now, an Irish representation at Westminster would, without making any vital change in the English Constitution, furnish a precedent by which the self-governing colonies from time to time, as they expressed a desire to contribute to Imperial expenditure, be incorporated with the Imperial legislature. You will perhaps say that I am making the Irish Question a stalking-horse for a scheme of Imperial federation. But if so, I am at least placing Ireland in the forefront of the battle.

To this letter Mr. Parnell replied from the House of Commons on June 23, 1888. Among his many characteristics was one peculiar to himself. He hated England, but he had no quarrel with the British Empire. If shouting had been in his line, he would have shouted with his followers for the Mahdi and for the Boer in so far as they were thorns in the flesh of England. On the other hand, he would have encouraged Irish soldiers to smash the Mahdi and to coerce the Boer in the interest of the British

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that difficulties and great difficulties might not occur in the execution, I do not pretend. I have yet heard of none, however, which appear insurmountable. The principle, perhaps, arises, not from the nature of things, but from the prejudices and opinions of the people both on this side and the other side of the Atlantic.' (Adam Smith, of course, was dealing in 1776 with the only colonies we possessed worthy of the name, those in North America.)

'We on this side of the water are afraid lest the multitude of American representatives should overturn the balance of the Constitution and increase too much either the influence of the Crown on the one hand, or the force of the democracy on the other. But if the number of American representatives were to be in proportion to the produce of American taxation, the number of people to be managed would increase exactly in proportion to the means of managing them, and the means of managing to the number of people to be managed. The monarchical and democratical parts of the Constitution would after the union stand in exactly the same degree of relative force with regard to one another as they had done before.

'The people on the other side of the water are afraid lest their distance from the seat of Government might expose them to many oppressions. But their representatives in Parliament, of which the number ought from the first to be considerable, would easily be able to protect them from all oppression. The distance could not much weaken the dependency of the representative upon the constituent, and the former would still feel that he owed his seat in Parliament, and all the consequence which he derived from it, to the goodwill of the latter. It would be the interest of the former, therefore, to cultivate that goodwill by complaining with all the authority of a member of the Legislature of every outrage which any civil or military officer might be guilty of in those remote parts of the Empire. The distance of America from the seat of Government, besides, the natives of that country might flatter themselves, with some appearance of reason, too, would not be of very long continuance. Such has hitherto been the rapid progress of that country in wealth, population, and improvement, that in the course of little more than a century, perhaps, the produce of American might exceed that of British taxation. The seat of the Empire would then naturally remove itself to that part of the Empire which contributes most to the general defence and support of the whole.'—*The Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii., p. 137.

Empire. This feeling, rarely expressed in the spoken word, finds utterance in the letter in which he acknowledged Mr. Rhodes' offer of help for the Home Rule movement :[1]

My own feeling upon the matter is that, if Mr. Gladstone includes in his next Home Rule measure provisions for such retention (that is, of the Irish members at Westminster), we should cheerfully concur in them, and accept them with goodwill and good faith with the intention of taking our share in the Imperial partnership. I believe also that in the event stated this will be the case, and that the Irish people will cheerfully accept the duties and responsibilities assigned to them, and will justly value the position given them in the Imperial system. I am convinced that it would be the highest statesmanship on Mr. Gladstone's part to devise a feasible plan for the continued presence of the Irish members here, and from my observation of public events and opinion since 1885 I am sure that Mr. Gladstone is fully alive to the importance of the matter, and that there can be no doubt that the next measure of autonomy for Ireland will contain the provisions which you rightly deem of such moment. It does not come so much within my province to express a full opinion upon the question of Imperial federation, but I quite agree with you that a continued Irish representation at Westminster will immensely facilitate such a step, while the contrary provision in the Bill of 1886 would have been a bar. Undoubtedly this is a matter which should be dealt with in accordance with the opinion of the colonies themselves, and if they should desire to share in the cost of Imperial matters—as certainly they now do in the responsibility—and should express a wish for representation at Westminster, I quite think it should be accorded to them, and that public opinion in these islands would unanimously concur in the necessary constitutional modifications.

Satisfied with these assurances of Mr. Parnell's, Mr. Rhodes replied on the following day enclosing a cheque for £5,000 as the first instalment of his contribution of £10,000 to the funds of the party. He gave this large amount, to use his own words, 'as a proof of my deep and sincere interest in the question, and as I believe that the action of the Irish party on the basis which you have stated will lead, not to disintegration, but really to a closer union of the Empire, making it an Empire in reality, and not in name only.'

In further correspondence with Mr. Parnell, he was to give yet another proof that his advocacy of local autonomy was part of a scheme of closer Imperial union, and not as a stepping-stone to Imperial dissolution. When the domestic scandal in which the great Irish leader was involved compelled him to take arms against that monstrous triple alliance composed of Mr. Gladstone, the Noncon-

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 849, 850.

formist conscience, and the Irish Catholic priesthood in Ireland, he uttered many wild and whirling words. Addressing the old Fenian Guard, he began a speech at Navan with, 'Men of Royal Meath, perhaps some day or other in the long-distant future someone may arise who may have the privilege of addressing you as "Men of Republican Meath." Of that future I know nothing, and shall predict nothing here.' Upon reading this, Mr. Rhodes, who is not much given to letter-writing, at once penned a remonstrance to Mr. Parnell, calling his attention to the fact that the words reported, if they were seriously spoken, constituted a breach of the understanding on which Mr. Rhodes had given assistance to the Irish cause; and 'so strongly had Mr. Parnell felt Mr. Rhodes' Imperialist influence, and so sincere was he, and so anxious to prove the sincerity of the pledges he had given Mr. Rhodes that the Home Rule movement did not aim at separation, that he at once wrote in reply to regret the words he had used, and to say he had gone further than he intended, the words in question being in fact contradicted by other passages of the same speech.'[1]

This letter of Parnell's was burned with Groot Schuur, though other important correspondence was happily saved. The correspondence, which is creditable to both the parties, should nail to the counter the monstrous lie that Mr. Rhodes ever did, in any circumstances or at any time, intrigue against the Imperial position. It was perhaps a misfortune that it was not published, though Mr. Parnell's objection to the disclosure of his views upon Imperial federation (which would have been used against him with great effect by the extreme Republican section of his party in the United Kingdom and in America) is easily intelligible. There can, however, be no excuse for the persistent misrepresentation of Mr. Rhodes. For with habitual frankness he told his constituents at Barkly West all about the matter very shortly after the correspondence had taken place:[2]

There have been many things invented respecting my career; I have been told that my object is to obtain a seat in the English Parliament; but, of course, I give no heed to these rumours: there is no truth in

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 854. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

them. It is my intention to remain attached to Cape politics, for I take a great interest in them, and I tell you candidly I have not the slightest idea of quitting South Africa for any other country. Here I can do something; but were I to go to England as a politician I should be lost in obscurity. I have been told that my desire is to enter the English Parliament, and that my contribution to the Parnell fund was made with this object. I have the presumption to say that I believe I could at any time obtain a seat in the English Parliament without paying Mr. Parnell £10,000, and that if I ever stood for the English Parliament I should not stand for an Irish constituency. I gave Mr. Parnell's cause £10,000 because in it, I believe, lies the key of the federal system on the basis of perfect Home Rule in every part of the Empire, and in it, also, the Imperial tie begins (September 28, 1888).

Mr. Rhodes' detractors have been the less justified in ignoring the speech which contains this passage, because it was one of the most important which he ever made, and contains this 'most intelligent anticipation of events before they occurred':

Weak amongst ourselves, we shall be still weaker to deal with the neighbouring States. We shall pass our time in mutual recriminations and a helpless policy. Meantime the development that Nature has given us will pass into other hands. Never was there a time in which it was more necessary that the Cape Colony should be united under the strongest conceivable Government, for whilst recognising the individual sentiments of the various races, still, it must claim by its age, by its expansion, and by its population that it should be the predominant State in South Africa. . . . I am not desirous to interfere with the freedom of the Transvaal or the independence of the Transvaal, and therefore, if it be the desire of the Free State through its Republican sentiments and interests to join with the Transvaal, it should be no desire of ours to interfere with this ambition. But the Cape Colony should claim to hold the keys to the interior. As soon as possible we should take control of Bechuanaland; we should state by our own policy that we are prepared to take the administration right through to the Zambesi, and that we feel that Cape Colony must be and shall be the dominant State in South Africa. If our possessions stretched from Cape Town to the Zambesi, no one could deny this assertion. . . . Here are the politics of South Africa in a nutshell. Let us leave the Free State and the Transvaal to their own destinies. We must adopt the whole responsibility of the interior. Let us consider that as an inheritance of the Cape Colony, and let us be prepared to take that responsibility at all hazards. As to the neighbouring States, we must take the responsibility as to the railway communication if they so desire it. We must propose a Customs Union on every suitable occasion, but we must always remember that the gist of the South African Question lies in the extension of the Cape Colony to the Zambesi. If you are prepared to take that, there is no difficulty in the future. We must endeavour to make those who live with us feel that there is no race distinction between us. Whether Dutch or English, we are combined in one object, and that is the union of the States of South Africa without abandoning the Imperial tie. And what we mean by the Imperial tie is this: that we have the most perfect self-government internally whilst retaining to ourselves the obligation of mutual defence against the outside world.

It is not always that a statesman in the enjoyment of office remembers the pledges he gave when he was in pursuit of it. But in the first speech which Mr. Rhodes as Prime Minister made to his constituents at Kimberley[1] he said:

> It is customary to speak of a United South Africa as possible within the near future. If we mean a complete union with the same flag, I see very serious difficulties. I know myself that I am not prepared at any time to forfeit my flag. I repeat, I am not prepared at any time to forfeit my flag. I remember a story about the editor of a leading journal in this country. He was asked to allow a supervision over his articles in reference to native policy, and he was offered a free hand with everything else. 'Well,' he asked, 'if you take away the direction of my native policy, what have I left?' And so it is with me. If I have to forfeit my flag, what have I left? If you take away my flag you take away everything.

It may be open to question—it has, indeed, been severely questioned—whether or not it is desirable that one not an elector in Great Britain and Ireland should contribute to the electioneering funds of any of the parties contending for supremacy within the marches of the Imperial Parliament. Upon the merits of this discussion I have no intention of entering, and I will make only this contribution to it: that it is within my own knowledge that contributions have been accepted by the keepers of the funds of both the great political parties in England, not only from non-electors, but from men not even subjects of the British Crown; and Mr. Rhodes might well plead that his exclusion from the full privileges of a British subject was the reason why he helped to finance a cause which (as he believed) would extend the Parliamentary franchise to citizens of Greater as well as of Great Britain. Be this as it must, it is not to be gainsaid that attacks upon him on this score come with the worst possible grace from members of the Liberal party. The facts connected with his gift of £10,000 to Mr. Parnell are known to everybody. Those relating to a similar, though smaller, donation to the campaign chest of the Gladstonians in 1892 are, unfortunately, not so well known. In obedience to the motive which dictated the grant to Mr. Parnell—the fact, that is, that Mr. Rhodes saw in Home Rule for Ireland the germs of Imperial federation—induced him to offer like assistance to the Gladstonian party, then much straitened by

[1] September 6, 1890.

the secession of many wealthy supporters. Mr. Rhodes had excellent reasons for distrusting the Imperial policy of Mr. Gladstone. When, therefore, he offered a very considerable sum to the electioneering funds of the party Mr. Gladstone led, he coupled his offer with conditions. He wrote to Mr. Schnadhorst, the then Liberal Election Agent in Chief, volunteering to give £5,000 towards the expenses of the impending campaign, on the express understanding that Mr. Gladstone's programme should not include a British withdrawal from Egypt.[1] If this condition were not complied with, he insisted that the amount of his subscription should be devoted to some charitable purpose, of a non-political character, to be selected by Mr. Gladstone and, I believe, Lord Rosebery. Mr. Schnadhorst joyfully accepted the money and the condition under which it was given; but not very long after Mr. Gladstone, in a speech at Newcastle inveighed against the prolongation of our occupation of Egypt, and made the earliest possible abandonment of the Delta a plank in the Liberal platform. Mr. Rhodes, incensed and surprised, wrote to Mr. Schnadhorst, and demanded the instant application of his subscription to the fund prescribed by the conditions of the gift. The reply he received was to the effect that the money had been already expended, and that Mr. Rhodes might rest assured that Imperialism would be safe in the hands of Mr. Gladstone's Government, because the control of Foreign Affairs was committed to the hands of so stalwart an Imperialist as Lord Rosebery. Mr. Rhodes was naturally dissatisfied with this shuffling evasion of an explicit understanding, and wrote a vigorous letter to Lord Rosebery, enclosing copies of the correspondence between himself and Schnadhorst. This correspondence exists, and will doubtless be produced, if my statements are challenged.[2]

I am dealing in a separate chapter with the Raid and Mr. Rhodes' part in it. Here it is enough to say that not

[1] At the time the idea of a Cape-to-Cairo railway was gradually maturing in Mr. Rhodes' brain.

[2] I have left this passage exactly as it was written in March, 1901, long before the publication of the Rhodes-Schnadhorst correspondence in the *Spectator*. Mr. Rhodes spoke from memory, and I quoted from memory, and it is surprising how very slight are the inaccuracies in the text.

the least important result of that tragic farce was the closing of the account between Mr. Rhodes and the Bond. The ledger, so to speak, was made up when he resigned his Premiership to Sir Hercules Robinson in the beginning of 1896. When the profit and loss account was presented, it was seen that both parties to the implied contract had fulfilled their share of the bargain, and neither had reasonable ground to complain of the other. The Dutch, on the one hand, had secured their immediate object, for the one statesman South Africa had produced had supported the protection of agriculture, which was their chief domestic aspiration. Mr. Rhodes, on the other hand, had kept an open road to the North, and had pushed the limits of the Empire towards those of the other British possessions scattered over the face of the African continent. That was all that was in the contract, and by both the parties the expressed obligations were carried out to the letter. Behind these overt provisions, was there an expectation, on one side or the other, not ostensibly set forth? Perhaps. Mr. Rhodes has said to me more than once: 'I thought I was making use of Hofmeyr, and Hofmeyr thought he was making use of me. Which was right I cannot tell.' It may be that Mr. Hofmeyr, and those for whom he acted, entertained a belief that sooner or later Mr. Rhodes must fall into line with the policy tentatively submitted to him by Mr. Borckenhagen in 1890, and flare forth as leader of 'a united South Africa, independent of all the rest of the world.' From the Dutch point of view, many things might well have seemed to point in this direction. Mr. Rhodes, as Hofmeyr knew, could not but chafe under the restraints imposed upon his Empire-making by the caution, the indifference, the solid ignorance, which characterized the rule of Downing Street until Mr. Chamberlain became Secretary for the Colonies. He believed that Mr. Rhodes, having to choose between restriction within the limits of Cape Colony and cutting—to use a once familiar phrase—the Imperial painter to get elbow-room in which to work out his schemes of expansion after his own fashion, would, albeit reluctantly, choose the latter part. He was aware that Mr. Rhodes liked the Dutch colonists, and that, Radical as he was alleged to be, his sympathies were in better

accord with the sixteenth-century views of the owners and tillers of the soil than with those pushing nineteenth-century methods of which, in fact, he was a living embodiment. This estimate of the forces which the Afrikanders hoped would impel him to aspire to a 'united South Africa independent of all the rest of the world' blinded them to a side of his character of whose strength and persistency they knew scarce anything. Yet it was concisely summed up in that criticism by a Dutch elector (so often quoted by its object) that 'Rhodes was too damnably like an Englishman.' Mr. Rhodes *is* so damnably like an Englishman, in his good qualities and his imperfections alike, that it would be hard to find one more typical in the whole range of the King's dominions. Pride of race, contempt for the foreigner, a conviction (not expressed, but always implied) that the earth was made for the possession and enjoyment of the Anglo-Saxon race, dogged determination, the incapacity to accept defeat—all these qualities are writ very large in Mr. Rhodes. His habit of thinking aloud, which is curiously inveterate in private as in public life, should have prevented any misconception as to his real ambitions. When he was courting the Dutch Afrikanders, he never forgot to remind them that he was an Englishman. When he told them, either in the Assembly or at a Bond meeting, that he had made South Africa his new home, he ever impressed on them the fact that he bore the 'traditions and history' of the old one with him. He might change the name of his house from the suburban 'Priory' to the old Dutch 'Groot Schuur' (Big Granary), and fill it with that Netherlandish furniture which he loved; but over the Flemish gables there always floated—metaphorically at least — the Union Jack. And though the equipment of Groot Schuur was Dutch from attic to basement, its atmosphere, like the master's 'traditions and history,' came from Bishop's Stortford. His often-expressed sympathy with Dutch sentiments and prejudices was quite sincere; but its roots were deep in the kinship of the two races. Take once more that noteworthy speech at the Paarl in 1891:

I was reflecting only to-day that the *Cape Times* has thought it worth while to spend a couple of hundred pounds on a cable from England

giving a criticism from the London *Times* of my speech at Kimberley,[1] and when I read that criticism I discovered that the English people were not satisfied with me. They think that I am too Afrikander. Then I have just received the *Free State Express*, in which Mr. Borckenhagen slates me in the most fearful language because I am too much an Englishman. . . . 'Tis not a question of the English and the Dutch; believe me, that is over. I hope it is over, and I believe it is over. Mind you, it has been one of the greatest tussles in existence, because you have only got to read history. If ever there was a proud rude man, it was an Englishman; the only man to cope with him was a Dutchman. You have only got to read Motley's 'History of the Dutch Republic' to see how the Dutch fought the Spaniards, and were beaten; how they returned again and again; and now they are the most dominant race in the world, except, perhaps, the Englishman, and really I hardly know which to choose.

That—himself the unconscious artist—that is the portrait of Cecil John Rhodes.

It is possible that the Dutch did not realize one other characteristic which has been responsible for many of Mr. Rhodes' successes, and not a few of his defeats, that he will work with anybody or with any party which is in temporary sympathy with the end he has in view. His goal was a united South Africa. It had been Sir Bartle Frere's before him. But it was the Bond's also; and so it was easy for him, not only to say, but to think: 'There is no difference between Frere's policy and the policy of the Afrikander Bond.[2] 'The people are beginning to see,' he said in the same speech, 'that this is the grand, central idea. Although there may be two different ways of working it out, the object is the same.' As matter of fact, the ways of 'working it out' were so fundamentally different as to constitute in practice two irreconcilable and antagonistic policies. It is a nice question of Kantian ethics how far two individuals, for instance, are justified in co-operating to reach the same goal, when their respective designs on it are antagonistic. You are riding to York on an urgent charitable mission of life and death. Side by side with you rides Dick Turpin, seeking to establish an alibi which shall save his neck from the rope. Each is aware of the other's purpose, and you come to an obstacle which can only be removed by the joint efforts of both, and which, being unremoved, will defeat your several aims. Are you justified in assisting Dick Turpin to cheat

[1] See *ante* p. 351.
[2] Speech to the Afrikander Bond, Kimberley, March 30, 1891.

the gallows in order that you may accomplish your charitable errand? 'Davus sum non Œdipus,' as Mr. Merriman would say. I do not feel called upon to decide a question of abstract morality, and I am sure that I could not if I tried; but the illustration I have given will help to explain not only Mr. Rhodes' alliance with the Bond, but many incidents in his career which have lent themselves to the most brazen misrepresentation by his enemies. It is said that all roads lead to Rome; and Mr. Rhodes would argue that if, after the maturest deliberation, it was your settled conviction that duty called on you to get to Rome in the shortest possible space of time, all that you had to consider was how best you could comply with that particular dictate. The shortest cut might involve association with the most disreputable companions, and might even involve a flagrant disregard of the rights of property, set forth unambiguously on notice boards that 'Trespassers will be prosecuted.' It might in the last extreme entail the perpetration of such crimes as Benvenuto chronicles with engaging candour:[1] 'And though I had sometimes been guilty of manslaughter, yet as God's Vicar upon earth had recalled me from my own country, and confirmed my pardon by his authority, and all that I had done was in defence of the body which Heaven had given me, I did not see how I could in any sense be thought to deserve death.' Mr. Rhodes would perhaps demur to the rueful excuse of Cellini's, that such cases as his 'are often owing to the stars—not that they conspire to do us either good or harm, but that these proceed from their conjunctions, to which we are all said to be subject.'

It is an interesting fact, though one not inconsistent with the eccentricities of human nature, that Mr. Rhodes should have fallen a victim to the very fault against which he has constantly warned others. The Raid was, at least in its conception, a short-cut to the union of South Africa, and it is against short-cuts that Mr. Rhodes has continually enjoined his supporters to be on their guard. Only two years before the commission of that monumental act of folly, in one of those soliloquies which do duty with him for his public speeches, he revealed himself to this purpose:[2]

[1] 'Memoirs,' Roscoe's translation, p. 262. [2] 'Life and Speeches,' p. 359.

Never hurry and hasten in anything. I remember in the impetuosity of my youth I was talking to a man advanced in years who was planting —what do you think? He was planting oak-trees, and I said to him very gently that the planting of oak-trees by a man advanced in years seemed to me rather imaginative. He seized the point at once, and said to me: 'You feel that I shall never enjoy the shade?' I said, 'Yes,' and he replied: 'I have the imagination, and I know what that shade will be, and, at any rate, no one will ever alter those lines. I have laid my trees on certain lines. I know that I cannot expect more than to see them beyond a shrub, but with me rests the conception and the shade and the glory.'

And it is also not a little interesting to find that the only criticism he ever passed upon Sir Bartle Frere, for whose character and policy he had the highest admiration and respect, was that he tried to federate South Africa in half an hour.[1]

Dip where you will into Mr. Rhodes' speeches, you will always find the underlying idea of framing a policy, and patiently waiting for its adoption. Take, for instance, two speeches, one made a year before the Raid, and the other six months after it. In the former[2] Mr. Rhodes spoke in that curious impersonal way which is one of his characteristics:

One went into Parliament with a hobby twelve years ago, and stuck steadily to it. One has had very unhappy times over it; but I find if you stick to a point which is a right point, a proper point, a point in the interests of the country, you gradually win the people to it.

And in the latter:[3]

I wish to clear away the idea that because one's situation changes one's policy changes. If I have a say in the country, my policy will never change. I would be a very small human being if I altered through the recent troubles the idea of a lifetime. I hope you will prepare your mind for the ideas I conceive—namely, some mode of self-government as a means of making you (the Rhodesians) one of the States of South Africa, and, above all, that the end of our efforts shall be South African federation.

It may be asked why, if he adhered to his policy of a federated South Africa, to be achieved by the assistance of

[1] As he told the Afrikander Bond: 'You can be assured, and assure others, that there is no difference between my policy and yours, because when you founded your society you founded it, not on a basis of a local idea, but on a basis of a broad, united South Africa. The mistake that has been made in the past is to think that a union can be made in half an hour' (Kimberley, March 30, 1891).

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 402.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 481.

intelligent Dutch opinion in the Cape Colony, he ever committed himself to the plans of the Reformers in Johannesburg, and to the Raid, which was its incidental but most disastrous episode. The answer seems to be that Mr. Rhodes, howbeit he never changes his views as to his goal, has realized, and has constantly expressed the opinion, that there are more ways than one of getting to it. That which commended itself to him at the outset, and along which he travelled with infinite patience for a dozen years, was what might be called the natural path. When he entered political life, he found that there existed among the Dutch a vague, though vocal, aspiration to such a union of the different States of South Africa as he also felt to be essential to welfare and stability. The dream of a united South Africa, essentially Dutch in character, was originally confined to a few visionaries, who had no conception of the way in which their vision should or might materialize. He therefore conceived the very practical idea of crystallizing these aspirations under a somewhat different form. As matters stood, Dutch influence must have leavened the whole constitution. All that was necessary to reconcile this realization of the Dutch ideal with the maintenance and expansion of the Imperial supremacy was to make the British colony, the Cape, the dominant factor. Even when we look back now, and, in the light of experience, survey the situation as it presented itself to Mr. Rhodes, it is plain that the design was at once promising and statesmanlike. Local autonomy appealed to the Dutch colonists; Imperial supremacy satisfied the men of British descent. To work as an Englishman with the Afrikander Bond was the practical outcome of Mr. Rhodes' meditation. The plan failed, not because of the Raid, which is the superficial explanation of its failure, for the Raid, with all that it implied, was not a cause, but a recognition that the natural path was insuperably barricaded. The nature of the obstacle was to be explained with admirable lucidity some six years later by Lord Milner, in that famous speech at Graaff Reinet, of which isolated fragments have been so often quoted, but whose drift has been so persistently and so wilfully misstated and misunderstood.

In that speech, I take it, are set forth the several causes of

the failure of Mr. Rhodes' great design. He did not see, and he could not have foreseen them at the time when he initiated that noble policy to which he had devoted the greater part of his career. He had underrated the vigour of the community; he had not realized the influence of prejudices stronger than affection—stronger than interest, even. The ties that bound the less intelligent Dutch of the Cape Colony to their still less intelligent kinsmen beyond the Orange and the Vaal, stouter at all times than he or other observers knew, were almost incalculably strengthened by the power for resistance which the new-found wealth of the Rand set in the hand of Mr. Kruger. When Mr. Rhodes first formulated his policy Krugerism was non-existent. Though the germs of it had been apparent long before, it was not till October 25, 1898, that he first defined Krugerism[1]:

> I will tell you what I mean by Krugerism. As you know, in the Transvaal the whole of the wealth, the greater portion of the population, practically the whole of the intelligence, is not represented at all, but they are lived upon by foreigners and an ignorant minority. Now, in this country they desire to apply Krugerism in this way; they are perfectly aware that the votes of the majority are for the party of progress, and they say: 'We will not allow you to be fairly represented. We will evade it in every possible way, and allow the government of the country to be carried on by a minority, and we will prevent any fair redistribution, so as to prevent the majority having a voice.' This is really Krugerism again in a minor form, and that is what we are fighting. . . . I do not blame President Kruger. He saw very clearly that the North ought to be developed, but he saw his future was over when I took the North. As he once said very fairly to myself: 'Rhodes, you are putting a ring-fence round me, and that is why I am fighting you. . . .' You have no feelings against the Dutch. I am sure I have none against them, but I determined to fight back to back with the intelligent section of the Dutch population against this terrible Commissie van Toezicht system. It is absolutely the gentlemen in Camp Street (the Bond) and that youngster in the *Ons Land* office (Malan) who are running the whole country. It is absolutely so. I have talked with individual members of Parliament who have been returned on that side of the House. They have been terrorized; they are absolutely servants; they hate the whole thing, and dare not move against it. It is this terrorism that we are fighting with the Dutch, and the terrorism initiated from Pretoria. The whole of the Transvaal is governed by one man with servants from a foreign State. One must not think that the Hollanders have any influence with President Kruger. They are his servants; they might be immediately dismissed.

This was the barricade in what I have called the natural path to South African unity. Mr. Rhodes was able to carry

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 613.

with him the goodwill of the intelligent Dutch in Cape Colony, a goodwill which was hardly affected by the Raid.[1] But the moment his policy came into conflict with the selfish and barbaric exclusiveness adopted by Mr. Kruger, the whole mass of Dutch opinion controlled by the Afrikander Bond and its wire-pullers, and expounded in the columns of *Ons Land*, was raised against it, and its author was powerless. The methods of the Bond were pretty much those of the Irish Land League. A Protestant ministry is at least as capable as a Catholic priesthood of applying the spiritual screw, and, for reasons with which I shall deal elsewhere, the Dutch Reformed Church identified itself with the Bond, just as in Ireland the Catholic priesthood made common cause with the Land League. Dissentients from the Bond policy were denounced from the pulpit, and their privacy was violated by the *predikant*, who, in the guise of grace before meat, would offer up a political indictment of the head of the house in the midst of his family. It was not till he had discovered that this barrier was insuperable that Mr. Rhodes sanctioned (he certainly did not originate) the adoption of the short-cut. As will be seen hereafter, he had been identified but for a very short time with the movement which was maturing in Johannesburg, and assuredly he had given to that movement and its probable consequences not a hundredth part of the patient study and examination which he had devoted to his survey of that natural path by which he had intended to reach his destination. Short-cuts proverbially involve long journeys, and the Raid was no exception to the rule. Two ways towards realizing the dream of a united South Africa under the British flag had been tried and found impossible. One was brought up abruptly

[1] In a speech at Cape Town on July 18, 1899, Mr. Rhodes said: 'Would you believe it?—I received to-day a hundred telegrams from the Paarl. There is some terrible conspiracy on. They all come from Dutch names. I should recommend *Ons Land* to inquire into it to-morrow, and I am told, on referring them to a friend of mine, Mr. Faure, that they are Dutch of the very best position in the Paarl. There is something very wrong going on, and the Commissie van Toezicht will have to meet. But it is a fact that, apart from the addresses which you have given me to-day, I have received these telegrams which I mention, and there is also from my own district, lying here on the table, an address signed entirely by Dutch names. That is what we are working for, not only the union of the country, but union of the races; and if I may put it, that will come right when once the principle of equal rights is accepted, equal rights for every civilized man south of the Zambesi.'

against the ironstone wall of Afrikander prejudice; the other lost itself ignominiously in the hopeless bog of the Jameson Raid.

In the foregoing pages I have not attempted an exhaustive sketch of Mr. Rhodes' political career; I have treated it as—what it is for the purposes of this book—a cardinal factor in the South African Problem. As I hope I have made clear, every Englishman who has taken up this problem seriously has had precisely the same ambition in view. The difference has been one of means, not of ends. The choice of men, of course, has played an important part either in increasing or diminishing the difficulties encountered in compassing the end desired. I have no hesitation in saying that in my judgment the whole of the earlier policy of Mr. Rhodes—that is to say, the policy pursued by him from his entry upon public life, and thenceforth for more than a dozen years—did much to render the final attainment of that goal possible. The Raid, to which I must refer at some detail in the next chapter, constituted but a very insignificant divagation from the real path, and served rather to disclose the magnitude of the obstacles with which that path was strewn than to create fresh ones. My object has not been to write a vindication of Mr. Rhodes, though I feel assured that those who read this sketch with an unbiassed mind will realize that both the goal which Mr. Rhodes had in view and the path he selected to attain it were not only quite other than those they have been represented to be, but have been consistent both with the theory and practice of the highest British statesmanship.

CHAPTER VII

THE RAID

I wish to put in a caveat against the indiscriminate use of the words 'revolution' and 'revolutionary.' A revolution may be the greatest of calamities; it may be the highest of blessings. In England the phrases 'the Revolution,' 'from the time of the Revolution,' 'the government which has prevailed since the period of the Revolution,' are terms which are applied to the change from subserviency to France and the arbitrary tyranny of our pensioned Stuarts to national independence and the rule of law and liberty which began to prevail under William III. and the House of Hanover.—*Lord John Russell to Lord Blomfield, September*, 1860.

PROBABLY no incident in modern history has been so magnified out of all proportion to its demerits as that of the Jameson Raid. It is true that this Night of Spurs is as important a date in South African history as the flight from Varennes is in the French Revolution. But both episodes have to be judged in their political context. It would be as absurd to say that the midnight flitting of Louis XVI. caused the overthrow of the monarchy as it would be to assert that Dr. Jameson's ill-timed and mismanaged dash for Johannesburg was the origin of the present war. While no one, however, maintains the former thesis even out of love of paradox, there are very many who seriously propound the second. It is astounding to find men occupying very distinguished positions who will still maintain that an unauthorized and irresponsible raid of less than 500 persons, which was disavowed and discredited by the Imperial Government, could have so alarmed Mr. Kruger and his advisers that they spent millions upon millions to prevent the recurrence of an invasion which was checked without the slightest difficulty, and in the last resort forced them to declare war against one of the mightiest empires in history. For upwards of thirty

months the burghers of the Transvaal and of the Orange Free State have continued a resistance against an army of more than a quarter of a million which the Empire has been compelled to place in the field. It is preposterous, therefore, to pretend that at any time the Boers were seriously frightened by this inroad of 500 men. There is only one hypothesis on which Dr. Jameson's undertaking could have been regarded as alarming. If the oligarchy at Pretoria rested on so feeble and tottering a basis that a touch could overthrow it, then so insignificant an impact as that given by Dr. Jameson might have had the importance attached to the last straw. That hypothesis, however, is fiercely denied by Mr. Kruger's apologists, and subsequent events seem to confirm the truth of their denial. We have seen that in a bad cause the whole of the Dutch population of the two Republics will rise as one man if invasion be threatened. Long before the Jameson Raid this was the constant boast of the leading men in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The boast, as we know to our cost, was well founded, but it supplies a sufficient answer to those who contend that Mr. Kruger and President Steyn were really frightened by the Raid. There might have been something alarming in the episode had the invasion received the slightest moral support of the Imperial Government. The reverse of this, however, was the case. The upshot would hardly have been different from what it was if Johannesburg, imperfectly armed and quite unorganized, had risen in support of Dr. Jameson. But one thing stands out clearly in the midst of a mass of confused contradictions, and that is that Mr. Chamberlain's prompt repudiation of the Raid and its authors effectually quelled the embryonic revolution in Johannesburg. The Raid, considered in itself, had no more significance than the action of the undergraduates of Trinity College, Dublin, when they occasionally haul down the Irish National flag from the roof of the Mansion House. In one case as in the other, a few policemen are sufficient to bring the demonstration to an end. Still, as I have said, in spite of its intrinsic insignificance, the Raid has been a very powerful factor in South African politics.

I shall have a word or two to say presently upon the

moral aspects of this episode. For the present, however, it is sufficient to note that the action of Dr. Jameson is to be condemned on quite other grounds than those of morality. He was guilty in the sphere of politics of the gravest offence known in the game of whist. Consciously or unconsciously, he led up to his opponent's strong suit. Anyone who has watched a game of bridge can recall the shudder which a similar blunder provokes in the onlooker. It often happens that one set of partners have towards the close of a game a numerically strong suit, the control of which has passed out of their hands. Nothing can give them any real value except a palpable blunder on the part of their opponents. Such a blunder was Dr. Jameson's. The potentially strong suit in the otherwise hopeless hand held by Mr. Kruger was the sympathy of the Dutch in the colonies and of the civilized world in any conflict that might arise between him and the paramount Power. By mistakes of the most flagrant character, Mr. Kruger had parted so far as he was concerned with the control of that suit. Nothing could make those cards good unless they were led up to by one or other of his adversaries. The partners against him may be said to have been the Imperial Government and Mr. Rhodes and his agents. The play of the Imperial Government, though far from faultless, had studiously avoided the cardinal error. It was left to Dr. Jameson to commit it. He promptly opened Mr. Kruger's strong suit, with the consequences we are witnessing and experiencing to-day.

I have no intention of entering into details. Those who are interested in the study of this escapade will find it admirably, and on the whole most impartially, set forth in 'The Story of an African Crisis,' by Mr. Edmund Garrett, then editor of the *Cape Times*. There are, however, two aspects of the episode which are of real importance in their bearing upon the South African Problem. The first is the question as to the alleged implication of Mr. Chamberlain, the second the reasons which induced Mr. Rhodes to connect himself with so madcap a scheme, and the extent to which he must be held responsible for it. That there should have been any question raised as to Mr. Chamberlain's knowledge of, or connivance at, the Raid is one of

the foulest episodes in the history of party politics in England. It is, so far as I know, an unbroken tradition of public life in this country that when a statesman who has passed the greater part of his life under the eyes of his fellow-men gives his word as to a matter of fact which must be within his knowledge, his assurance is received without reservation or suspicion. Mr. Chamberlain has pledged his word of honour and has sworn upon oath that he knew nothing of the Raid before he received the news that Dr. Jameson had crossed the borders of the Transvaal. That should have been enough, and in all other periods of our history it would have been enough. But of late years an evil spirit has crept into public life; a strange vindictiveness, hitherto foreign to the national character, has sadly deteriorated the tone of party controversy. It is no new thing to attribute the most selfish and the most sordid motives to those with whom we are in political disagreement. Any statesman in any country who has occupied a prominent position in public affairs knows that when he enters public life his motives will be distorted and his words misconstrued. But in England, at any rate, he has always had the consolation of knowing that nothing but the most conclusive demonstration will convince his countrymen that he has been guilty of offences inconsistent with personal honour and the respect of his fellow-men. There is, unfortunately, no mistaking the nature of the charge which has been brought against Mr. Chamberlain. Stated nakedly, it amounts to this:

1. That he knew of the intention of Dr. Jameson to invade the Transvaal with or without a colourable pretext.

2. That, knowing the intention, he connived at the execution.

3. That, having been cognizant of the conspiracy before it matured, and having connived at its development and execution, he denied, both on his oath and on his word of honour, that he ever possessed such cognizance or practised such connivance. If there were any foundation for these charges, not only would Mr. Chamberlain be disqualified for office and for the society of honourable men, but the nation which condoned his offences would have been as guilty as

himself. Yet, without a shadow of evidence, these charges have been made and repeated in circumstances which do not admit of the excuse that they were the heated expressions of an excited moment.

Let us first give Mr. Chamberlain's own statement, made after the report of the Committee of the House of Commons which exonerated him of even suspicion of any cognizance of the Raid.

My answer (he said)[1] to these anonymous assailants is not in anything I can say. If they do not believe anything that I said before the Committee, they will not believe what I say now. My answer is my action. What happened when the Raid took place, when the suggestion was made to me that the Raid might take place? At that moment I could have no knowledge of what would be the success of the Raid. Many persons about me thought it would be successful, that the revolution in Johannesburg would be successful, and that assistance that would come to it would add to its success. I had before me what is now known as the 'women and children letter,' which expressed the fear that English women and children were in danger in Johannesburg. I had no reason whatever to doubt the authenticity of that letter; and I did not know, and none of my advisers knew, that the thing contemplated in that letter might not take place. I had the advice of many persons—I am not speaking officially—interested in South Africa, who called upon me to hold my hand. I was alone in London, I had no communication with my colleagues, I had to act at a moment's notice; and I did act in spite of all the temptation to refrain, in spite of the doubts in my own mind, because I felt that the act of Dr. Jameson was wrong, and therefore I felt as a Minister of the Crown that I was bound to repudiate it. Is that consistent with these scandalous accusations? It is impossible to suppose, if you think me such a fool, that any English Minister could be such a knave as to do what is attributed to me, that I could have taken this step by myself and in the circumstances described to the House, if I had known about it, was myself a party to the Raid and approved the policy of which the Raid was a part. That is the state of the case, and I am content to rest it there, and I have always been so content.

Nobody could have put the case more strongly than did Sir William Harcourt, who was himself a member of the Committee, and who had before him all the evidence and knew all the inferences which might be drawn from evidence which was supposed to exist, but which was not produced. On the same occasion as that upon which Mr. Chamberlain uttered the words I have quoted, Sir William Harcourt said:

If you got these telegrams to-morrow,[2] and if they contained all that the most malignant mind can suggest; if I found that Dr. Harris had

[1] July 26, 1897. [2] The so-called 'Hawksley Telegrams.'

telegraphed to Mr. Rhodes, saying, 'I went yesterday to Mr. Chamberlain; I told him all about it, and he approved of it altogether'; and if the Colonial Secretary and Lord Selborne said that nothing of the kind took place, I, who have seen the witnesses, would believe the Colonial Secretary and Lord Selborne.

Nor is that all. The most bitter and the least scrupulous of Mr. Chamberlain's assailants has always been Mr. Labouchere, who did not hesitate at the Queen's Hall meeting[1] to compare the Colonial Secretary to Judas Iscariot. In the draft report[2] which he submitted to the Select Committee, which did not find a single supporter, he stated:

Whilst your Committee is of opinion that the evidence placed before it in no way shows that the Colonial Office, when ceding to the Chartered Company a strip of the Bechuanaland Protectorate abutting on the Transvaal frontier, and handing over to the company the police of the Bechuanaland Crown Colony, on that colony being made over to the Cape Colony, was aware that Mr. Rhodes contemplated under any contingencies using this strip and these police to invade the Transvaal in order to afford aid to the Johannesburgers in any revolutionary outbreak, it regrets that the alleged complicity of the Colonial Office has not been probed to the bottom, because the slightest appearance of any indisposition to do this by your Committee may lead some persons erroneously to suppose that there may be some truth in the statements of witnesses connected with the Jameson plan, that the secret aims of Mr. Rhodes were more or less clearly revealed to Mr. Chamberlain and to Mr. Fairfield.

And in a more specific paragraph[3] Mr. Labouchere reviewed the evidence as follows:

Under these circumstances it is evident that, if Mr. Harris is to be believed, Mr. Chamberlain ceded to the Chartered Company a slip of the Bechuanaland Protectorate with a full knowledge that one of the reasons why the cession was desired by Mr. Rhodes was that it should form a 'jumping-off ground' for an invasion of the Transvaal should circumstances arise to render such invasion desirable. But it can hardly be supposed that Mr. Harris ever did make the communication that he says he did, either to Mr. Chamberlain or to Mr. Fairfield. The latter is dead, but his letter and his high and honourable career as a public servant bear witness for him. Mr. Fairfield, it was stated by Mr. Chamberlain, was somewhat deaf, and might not have heard the communication, but neither Mr. Chamberlain himself nor Lord Selborne suffered from this infirmity. As regards the communication alleged to have been made to Mr. Chamberlain, it was one of paramount importance. Neither Mr. Chamberlain nor Lord Selborne gathered that it had been made. If, therefore, we are to believe that the alleged statement was ever made by Mr. Harris to Mr. Chamberlain and to Mr. Fairfield, the only possible conclusion is that Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Selborne and Mr. Fairfield, all men able and experienced in public affairs, of unquestioned personal honour, either owing to some temporary failure of their auditory sense did

[1] June, 1901. [2] Blue-book, 311, p. lxj. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

not hear what Mr. Harris said, or were cursed with such a density of intelligence that hearing it they neither understood what it meant nor asked for an explanation of its meaning.

Mr. Labouchere is constitutionally incapable of making graciously an admission to a political opponent. But the words of this draft report make it as clear as possible that Mr. Labouchere did not at that time believe one single word of the charges which he has thought fit to insinuate at a later date.

Mr. Chamberlain's statement with regard to the 'jumping-off ground' is as follows:[1]

We received no communication either from the High Commissioner or from the Transvaal Government which caused us to entertain the slightest suspicion that they (the police) were there (Pitsani) for any but a perfectly legitimate purpose. It was explained to me that the police were required for the guarding of the railway; that when the telegraph had been made some time previously difficulties had arisen which at one time threatened to be serious with the natives, and that it was possible that still greater difficulties would arise over so large a work as the making of a railway; that consequently, in order to prevent the possibility of such difficulties, it was desirable that a force of that kind should be concentrated at the railhead; and certainly it never entered into my mind at that time that it could be possible that with a force of that sort any attempt should be made at a hostile invasion of the Transvaal. Now, I have said that, at the interview to which Dr. Harris refers on the first of August, the conversation was chiefly directed to a discussion of the details connected with the proposal for the transfer, and my own mind was fully absorbed with that matter. I was interested chiefly in that, and I knew very little of other circumstances connected with the state of things in South Africa at the time. But undoubtedly the conversation did turn upon the grievances of which British subjects in the Transvaal complained. Dr. Harris told me that his information led him to believe that the Reformers, as they were called, were exhausting every peaceable method for obtaining redress; that their applications, which had been respectfully made to the Government of the Transvaal, had been met with insult and their demands rejected; that their patience was becoming exhausted, and that sooner or later it was quite possible that a rising would take place. He said that in his opinion such a rising would be an absolutely bloodless revolution; that he thought the action of the Transvaal Government was unpopular, not merely with the English, but with the great majority of the Dutch in the Cape Colony, and that very many of the subjects of the Transvaal itself sympathized with the grievances of the Reformers, and would not be prepared for anything like a forcible repression of their movement. It was in the course of this conversation that he made the remark, the exact words of which I could not possibly pledge my memory to at this distance of time, but it was to the effect—'I could tell you something in confidence,' or 'I could give you some confidential information.' I stopped him at once. I said: 'I do not want to hear any confidential information; I am here in an official capacity. I can

[1] Report of the Select Committee on British South Africa, p. 338.

only hear information of which I can make official use.' And I added: 'I have Sir Hercules Robinson in South Africa. I have entire confidence in him, and I am quite convinced he will keep me informed of everything I ought to know.'

Dr. Jameson in his evidence[1] said:

I mean to indignantly deny that I ever told, not only my officers, but anyone else, that I had Her Majesty's Government at my back. It would have been idiotic if I had done so, and absolutely untrue.

And in answer to a question,[2]

'Did Mr. Rhodes tell you that these preparations and the step he intended you to take in certain eventualities had the sanction and approval of the Imperial authorities?'

Dr. Jameson replied,

'No, certainly not—never at any time.'

'He never conveyed that in any way to you?'

'No, certainly not.'

The attempt to involve Mr. Chamberlain in responsibility for the Raid would be too contemptible to notice in face of the evidence I have cited, did it not throw light upon the length to which party animosity will carry politicians, especially towards a statesman who has at one time fought under the opposite flag. This unreasoning hatred of Mr. Chamberlain blinded his opponents to considerations which in the case of any other man they would have held to be conclusive. Let us for the sake of argument assume that Mr. Chamberlain had lent his countenance to a conspiracy which contained within it few elements of success. It must be obvious to the densest apprehension that in such a case the only possible chance of escape from contumely and disgrace for the Colonial Secretary lay in the complete success of the Raid to which he was an assenting party. I need not point out that if Dr. Jameson and the Johannesburgers between them had succeeded in overthrowing the Government of Mr. Kruger, Mr. Chamberlain could have derived no profit or credit from the triumph of a conspiracy of which he was bound to disavow all previous knowledge. Still, on the supposition that he had hopelessly compromised himself, he was bound, from motives of self-preservation, to do the utmost in his power

[1] Select Committee, p. 311. [2] *Ibid*, p. 315.

negatively, if not positively, to help forward the scheme. As a matter of fact, he blasted its prospects irrevocably before Dr. Jameson had gone a mile or two into Transvaal territory.

It was on Sunday, December 29, 1885, that Dr. Jameson crossed the frontier. On that very day Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to the High Commissioner :[1]

> It has been suggested, though I do not think it probable, that an endeavour might be made to force matters at Johannesburg to a head by someone in the service of the company advancing from Bechuanaland Protectorate with police. Were this to be done I should have to take action under Articles 22 and 8 of the Charter.[2] Therefore, if necessary, but not otherwise, remind Rhodes of these articles, and intimate to him that in your opinion he would not have my support, and point out the consequences which would follow.

Now, on this telegram an attempt has been made to base a charge of guilty knowledge of the contemplated Raid. But Mr. Garrett points out:

> Mr. Chamberlain afterwards explained in the House of Commons with great simplicity it was really due to the fact that Mr. Secretary Fairfield, who has South Africa under his special wing at the Colonial Office, had been led by the publication of the Leonard Manifesto in the *Times* of the previous day, and by the growing confidence of certain club and private rumours, to convey an urgent representation to his chief, which made the latter feel that he must at once put the High Commissioner on his guard.

As a matter of fact, the intention of Dr. Jameson to cross the border was known to a considerable number of persons in London, including myself. Within my own circle of acquaintances I can count at least a dozen who were as well informed as myself. They, however, knew nothing of the efforts made by Mr. Rhodes to prevent the execution of a design to which he has never denied that he was privy. Mr. Chamberlain, aware of the premeditated dash a day or two before it occurred, took every possible means to stop and turn back the expedition. A messenger with a safe conduct brought from Sir Jacobus De Wet, at that time our representative in Pretoria, the following peremptory message to Dr. Jameson :

> Her Majesty's Government entirely disapprove your conduct in

[1] 'The Story of an African Crisis,' p. 152.
[2] The Charter of the South African Company.

invading the Transvaal with an armed force; your action has been repudiated. You are ordered to retire at once from the country, and will be held personally responsible for the consequences of your unauthorized and most improper proceeding.[1]

This peremptory instruction was received by Dr. Jameson, who wrote in reply, before he had yet come into contact with the Boer forces:

I am in receipt of the message you sent from His Excellency the High Commissioner, and beg to reply for His Excellency's information that I should, of course, desire to obey his instructions; but as I have a very large force of both men and horses to feed, and having finished all my supplies in the rear, must perforce proceed to Krugersdorp or Johannesburg this morning for this purpose. At the same time I must acknowledge I am anxious to fulfil my promise on the petition of the principal residents of the Rand to come to the aid of my fellow-men in their extremity. I have molested no one, and have explained to all Dutch I have met that the above is my sole object, and that I shall desire at once to return to the Protectorate.

On December 30 Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed again: 'Are you sure Jameson has not moved in consequence of collapse?' (*i.e.*, of the Reform Movement); in reply to which Sir Hercules Robinson telegraphed that he had heard of a rumour to that effect, and had telegraphed thus to the resident Commissioner in the Bechuanaland Protectorate:

Is this correct? If it is, send a special messenger on a fast horse, directing him (Dr. Jameson) to return at once. A copy of this telegram should be sent to the officers with him, and they should be told that Her Majesty's Government repudiate this violation of the territory of a friendly State, and that they are rendering themselves liable to severe penalty.

Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed that same day:

In reply to your telegrams relative to situation in South African Republic, your action is cordially approved. I presume that Mr. C. J. Rhodes will co-operate with you in recalling the administrator of Matabeleland (Dr. Jameson). Keep me informed fully of political situation in all its aspects; it is not clearly understood here. Leave no stone unturned to prevent mischief.

On December 31 Mr. Chamberlain again telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson:[2]

You should represent to Mr. Rhodes the true character of Dr. Jameson's action in breaking into a foreign State which is in friendly treaty relations with Her Majesty in time of peace. It is an act of war, or rather of fili-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

[2] C. 7933, p. 5.

bustering. If the Government of the South African Republic had been overthrown, or had there been anarchy in Johannesburg, there might have been some shadow of excuse for this unprecedented act. If it can be proved that the British South Africa Company set Dr. Jameson in motion or were privy to his marauding action, Her Majesty's Government would at once have to face a demand that the charter should be revoked and the corporation dissolved.

As your first messenger may not succeed in overtaking Dr. Jameson, and it is not impossible that the latter may disregard the message, and even the second message sent by you through the British Agent at Pretoria, could you not, with President Kruger's assent, send Sir J. de Wet himself to meet Dr. Jameson and order him in a still more authoritative manner to return? I am apprehensive of the consequences to British as well as to Transvaal interests in Johannesburg if a collision should take place outside between the forces of the Transvaal and Dr. Jameson. You should confidentially impress upon the President the importance of avoiding an armed conflict in view of the possible ulterior consequences.

I presume that Mr. Rhodes will see the necessity of co-operating with you in undoing what Dr. Jameson has done. In any case the Company will probably have to pay a pecuniary indemnity for violation of territory and destruction of property by their officer.

More than that, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed *en clair* to the President of the South African Republic:[1]

Regret to hear of Jameson's action. Sir Hercules Robinson has sen messengers to call him back. Can I co-operate with you further in this emergency in endeavouring to bring about a peaceful arrangement which is essential to all interests in South Africa, and which would be promoted by the concessions that I am assured you are ready to make?

On January 1 the Colonial Secretary telegraphed:[2]

Glad to hear of Rhodes' repudiation of Jameson, who must be mad. I see no need for Rhodes to resign. Telegraph direct to editors of papers in Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Bloemfontein that you, I, and Rhodes repudiate Jameson's action, and that you are commanded by Her Majesty to enjoin all her subjects in South African Republic to abstain from aiding or countenancing Jameson or his force, to remain quiet and obey the law and the constitutional authorities, and to avoid tumultuous assemblies or in any manner to add to the excitement. Publish also in Cape press, and, if necessary, issue an additional formal proclamation. It seems a clear case for asking President of South African Republic to allow a flag of truce, under which De Wet can go up to Jameson and order him in the Queen's name to disarm and retire, making it plain to him that he is practically an outlaw and a filibuster. Of course, the British South Africa Company, however innocent, will have to make amends for this outrage. You had better repeat all this to De Wet through Governor of Natal, suggesting to the latter that with the concurrence of his Ministers he should issue a proclamation similar to your own. Her Majesty's Government will repudiate Jameson publicly here. De Wet should, as you ordered Newton to do, communicate with each of Jameson's officers direct, telling those who belong to the regular or reserve forces that they will be cashiered unless they obey Her Majesty's order to disarm and

[1] C. 7933, p. 6. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

retire. Inform Kruger fully of all steps taken. At the same time impress upon him most strongly necessity of avoiding collision while Her Majesty's Government are doing everything to prevent mischief. Take all steps you may think necessary in this crisis; I have full confidence in your discretion. The chief things are promptitude and vigour.

Mr. Kruger thanked[1] Mr. Chamberlain for his friendly telegram, and on January 2 telegraphed that he had laid it

before the Executive Council, and I am directed by that body to thank you for the offer you have made to co-operate with me under the present circumstances. The Executive Council sees in this the confirmation of the friendly feelings of Her Majesty's Government expressed in a message received yesterday from the High Commissioner.

And on January 2 Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed again:[2]

Jameson's conduct is altogether unjustifiable. Has De Wet appealed to officers accompanying him? Those in Government service will be cashiered if disobedient. Take strongest line with Jameson, whose continued refusal to obey will be act of rebellion, and greatly aggravate his original misconduct.

On January 4 Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain:[3]

Your emphatic repudiation on behalf of Her Majesty's Government of Jameson's action will be appreciated by all right-minded colonists, and tend towards restoring the feeling of mutual confidence and security, now completely shattered by that carefully matured conspiracy against a friendly State which culminated in the bloodshed near Krugersdorp.

All these telegrams were exchanged before it could be known whether Dr. Jameson's Raid would achieve its object or turn out the dismal fiasco it ultimately proved. Mr. Chamberlain's conduct, therefore, could not have been influenced by any knowledge of what was going on between Pitsani and Krugersdorp. It is too obvious to demand argument that on the hypothesis of Mr. Chamberlain's complicity in the Raid these telegrams gave him away to everybody. They placed him in the hands of the conspirators, tied and bound, if they possessed a shred of evidence that he was one of them. They gave Mr. Kruger an opportunity of demonstrating to the world the duplicity of British statesmanship, since they would have enabled him to prove that with one voice Mr. Chamberlain was egging on Dr. Jameson and with the other was denouncing him as an outlaw, a marauder,

[1] C. 7933, p. 11. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 13. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

and a freebooter. On the same hypothesis they would have ruined him irretrievably in the eyes of all classes of his fellow-countrymen, whether they were admirers of Dr. Jameson or apologists for Mr. Kruger. From the standpoint of Mr. Chamberlain's knowledge of the intended Raid, and from his subsequent conduct, as set forth in the telegrams, he would have been presented to his countrymen as a man who, out of sheer wantonness and love of evil, lured a chivalrous and adventurous Englishman to a destruction which he had carefully prepared and deliberately carried out; and all this for no earthly purpose. All that Mr. Chamberlain could have effected by the policy attributed to him was the ruin of himself and his party, the infliction of irreparable damage on the good name and material interests of his country, without benefit to a single person in the world except the President of the South African Republic. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the indictment brought against Mr. Chamberlain. In my judgment he made serious though very natural mistakes at this crisis, but they were quite other than those laid to his charge, and were prompted by motives creditable alike to his humanity and his sense of justice. To these errors of judgment I shall presently recur. Meanwhile, I would consider the far more interesting problem of Mr. Rhodes' share in the transaction.

It is immaterial to discuss the question how far Mr. Rhodes was responsible for the Raid itself in the form in which it actually occurred. There seems little reason to question the substantial justice of the report of the Select Committee, in which it is set forth that Mr. Rhodes[1]

seriously embarrassed both the Imperial and Colonial Governments, and his proceedings resulted in the invasion of the territory of a State which was in friendly relations with Her Majesty, in breach of the obligations to respect the right to self-government of the South African Republic under the Conventions[2] between Her Majesty and that State. Although Dr. Jameson 'went in' without Mr. Rhodes' authority, it was always part of the plan that these forces should be used in the Transvaal in support

[1] Report of Special Committee, p. xvi.

[2] It is interesting to notice, in view of the controversy which subsequently arose, as to whether the Convention of 1884 supplemented or superseded that of 1881, that the plural and not the singular is used in this report, which was signed by Mr. John Ellis, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Secretary Chamberlain, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Sidney Buxton, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Attorney-General, and Sir William Hart Dyke.

of an insurrection. Nothing could justify such a use of such a force, and Mr. Rhodes' heavy responsibility remains, although Dr. Jameson at the last moment invaded the Transvaal without his direct sanction.

There can be no doubt, and certainly Mr. Rhodes raised none, as to his moral responsibility for the Raid as it occurred. If Dr. Jameson, to use Mr. Rhodes' own expression, 'took the bit in his teeth,' it remains true that the bolting steed had been placed there for the purpose for which it was prematurely employed. It will be convenient here to put in the formal statement which Mr. Rhodes submitted to the Committee at the outset of the inquiry:

From the date[1] of the establishment of the gold industry on a large scale at Johannesburg much discontent has been caused by the restrictions and impositions placed upon it by the Transvaal Government, by the corrupt administration of that Government, and by the denial of civil rights to the rapidly-growing Uitlander population. This discontent has gradually but steadily increased, and a considerable time ago I learnt from my intercourse with many of the leading persons in Johannesburg that the position of affairs there had become intolerable. After long efforts they despaired of obtaining redress by constitutional means, and were resolved to seek by extra-constitutional means such a change in the Government of the South African Republic as should give to the majority of the population, possessing more than half the land, nine-tenths of the wealth, and paying nineteen-twentieths of the taxes in the country, a due share in its administration. I sympathized with, and as one largely interested in the Transvaal shared in these grievances; and further, as a citizen of the Cape Colony, I felt that the persistently unfriendly attitude of the Government of the South African Republic towards the Colony was the great obstacle to common action for practical purposes among the various States of South Africa. Under these circumstances I assisted the movement in Johannesburg with my purse and influence. Further, acting within my rights, in the autumn of 1895 I placed on territory under the administration of the British South Africa Company upon the borders of the Transvaal a body of troops under Dr. Jameson, prepared to act in the Transvaal in certain eventualities. I did not communicate these views to the Board of Directors of the British South Africa Company. With reference to the Jameson Raid I may state that Dr. Jameson went in without my authority. Having said this, I desire to add that I am willing generally to accept the findings as to facts contained in the report of the Committee of the Cape Parliament. I must admit that in all my actions I was greatly influenced by my belief that the policy of the present Government of the South African Republic was to introduce the influence of another foreign Power into the already complicated system of South Africa, and thereby render more difficult in the future the closer union of the different States.

Upon this statement Mr. Justin McCarthy, in 'The History of our Times,' used the following words:

[1] Minutes of Evidence taken before Select Committee on British South Africa, pp. 2, 3.

Whatever one may come to think of the policy and the action of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, it must be owned that that statement seems to be full, clear, candid, and consistent. He had indeed presented to the Committee a State paper of great historical importance.

This was the testimony of a critic naturally predisposed to view Mr. Rhodes' policy in an unfavourable light, and it was the view taken by the average Englishman. The plain, admitted fact, therefore, is that Mr. Rhodes, sharing the despair of those who had striven by constitutional means to effect a radical reform in the administration of the Transvaal, lent his support and influence and gave his money to the encouragement of an extra-constitutional, or, in other words, a revolutionary scheme for the remedy of evils, the existence of which is not seriously questioned.

In forming a judgment upon Mr. Rhodes' action, one is, of course, confronted by the fact that at the time he was encouraging this extra-constitutional course he was the Prime Minister of a colony whose Sovereign was in friendly relations with the South African Republic. But for that fact his action would not have differed substantially from that, say, of Byron in the support he gave to the cause of Greek emancipation, or from that of Englishmen who in later times have contributed to committees formed to aid revolutionary movements in Crete.

There are, however, historical precedents deserving attention. In the early part of last century Spain was convulsed by a civil war, which turned upon the much-debated question as to whether King Ferdinand could, by the edict known as the Pragmatic Sanction, repeal the Salic Law, which since the year 1713 had excluded females from the right of succession to the throne of Spain. On the death of Ferdinand in 1833, Don Carlos, the legitimate heir under the Salic Law, contested the succession of Isabella, who assumed the crown under the regency of Queen Christina. The main objection to Don Carlos as occupant of the Spanish throne was the fact that he represented a narrow, bigoted, and tyrannical oligarchy, which represented absolutism in its most uncompromising form. As Metternich said:[1]

La Reine Isabelle est la Revolution incarnée dans sa forme la plus

[1] See Fyfe's 'Modern Europe,' vol. ii., p. 428.

dangereuse; Don Carlos represente le principe Monarchique aux prises avec la Revolution pure.

In other words, Don Carlos represented Mr. Kruger, and Queen Isabella was, in the mistaken opinion of her supporters, the counterpart of the Uitlanders. And then we read:[1]

As a proof of goodwill, permission was given to Queen Christina to enrol volunteers both in England and France. Arms were supplied, and some thousands of needy or adventurous men ultimately made their way from our own country, as well as from France, to earn under Colonel de Lacy Evans and other leaders a scanty harvest of profit or renown.

In point of fact, the position of Colonel de Lacy Evans was not altogether unlike that of Dr. Jameson. And as Dr. Jameson acted under the authority of the Prime Minister of Cape Colony, so Colonel de Lacy Evans and his colleagues had the direct sanction of Lord Palmerston for their interference with the internal affairs of the Sovereign and independent State of Spain. Perhaps an even better excuse, if not justification, for the policy of Mr. Rhodes in interfering with the struggle between Autocracy and Liberalism in the South African Republic will be found in the following despatch, which I beg the reader to study as it is presented, pending a note of explanation:

There appear to have been two motives which have induced the Outlanders of Johannesburg to have joined willingly in the subversion of their Government. The first of these was that the Government of Mr. Kruger provided so ill for the administration of justice, the protection of personal liberty, and the general welfare of the people, that the Outlanders looked forward to the overthrow of their rulers as a necessary preliminary to all improvement in their condition.

The second motive was that a conviction had spread since the year 1884 that the only way in which the British South Africans could secure their independence of foreign control was by forming one strong Government for the whole of South Africa. Looking at the question in this view, Her Majesty's Government must admit that the Outlanders themselves are the best judges of their own interests.

That eminent jurist Vattel, when discussing the lawfulness of the assistance given by the United Provinces to the Prince of Orange when he invaded England and overturned the throne of James II., says: 'The authority of the Prince of Orange had doubtless an influence on the deliberation of the States-General, but it did not lead them to the commission of an act of injustice; for when a people from good reasons take up arms against an oppressor, it is but an act of justice and generosity to assist brave men in the defence of their liberties.'

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 437.

Therefore, according to Vattel, the question resolved itself into this: Did the people of Johannesburg take up arms against their Government for good reasons?

Upon this grave matter Her Majesty's Government hold that the people in question are themselves the best judges of their own affairs. Her Majesty's Government do not feel justified in declaring that the people of Johannesburg had not good reason for throwing off their allegiance to their former Government. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, cannot pretend to blame Mr. Rhodes for assisting them.

It must be admitted undoubtedly that the severance of the ties which bind together a ruler and his subjects is in itself a misfortune. Notions of allegiance become confused. The succession to the presidency is disputed; adverse parties threaten the peace of society; rights and pretensions are opposed to each other, and mar the harmony of the State. Yet it must be acknowledged, on the other hand, that the Johannesburg revolution has been conducted with singular temper and forbearance. . .

Such having been the causes and concomitant circumstances of the revolution in the South African Republic, Her Majesty's Government can see no sufficient grounds for the severe censure with which foreign Powers have visited the acts of Mr. Rhodes. Her Majesty's Government will turn their eyes rather to the gratifying prospect of a people building up the edifice of their liberties and consolidating the work of their independence amid the sympathies and good wishes of Europe.

I have promised the reader an explanatory note. Here it is. The despatch from which I have quoted, save for the substitution of the words 'people of Johannesburg' for 'the people of the Roman and Neapolitan States,' and the use of Mr. Rhodes' name in the place of that of the King of Sardinia, is word for word the despatch which Lord John Russell wrote on October 27, 1860,[1] in consequence of the raid of Garibaldi in Calabria, and the appeal of Count Cavour to the Sardinian Parliament for full powers to annex the provinces of Central and Southern Italy. Every single plea that was urged or could be urged in defence of the policy of Cavour and Garibaldi could be applied with equal force in vindication of Mr. Rhodes and Dr. Jameson except in one respect. Cavour and Garibaldi succeeded; Mr. Rhodes and Dr. Jameson failed. As Mr. Pope, Q.C.,[2] said in his address to the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1897:

When Garibaldi landed upon the coast of Sicily, he was as pure a filibuster as ever put on a red shirt; but success converted that red shirt into a garment of honour, and enabled the foundations to be laid of a new monarchy in Europe.

'Treason doth never prosper. What's the reason?
Why, if it prosper, none dare call it treason.'

[1] 'Life of Lord John Russell,' vol. ii., p. 325.
[2] Report of South African Committee, p. 508.

If Dr. Jameson had succeeded, I cannot help thinking that the somewhat pathetic words which he uses in one of his answers to the Committee would have been the history of this transaction, and we should not have been here now to try the causes of a failure. 'Of course, in a thing of this kind,' he said, 'I perfectly recognise that the proper thing would have been to tell the High Commissioner; but, then, I would never have entertained the subject if I was going to do the proper thing. I know perfectly well that as I have not succeeded, the natural thing has happened; yet I almost know that if I had succeeded I should have been forgiven.' Is not that really the history of the Raid? Rashness and impetuosity attended by failure. That happened which happens in all cases of disappointed movements; but if success had attended his enterprise, it may be that he would have been abundantly justified in his rashness and impetuosity, though it may be, having other responsibilities and other control, and desiring not quite the same form of conclusion, Mr. Rhodes may be correct in saying, and is correct in saying, that Dr. Jameson went in without his authority. I do not desire to save Mr. Rhodes' reputation one iota at the sacrifice of Dr. Jameson. The action of Dr. Jameson was rash, it turned out to be foolish; but it may nevertheless have been conceived in the true spirit of revolution, and if successful, I undertake to say, we should not have been condemning; we should rather have been taking advantage of the results that accrued from it. That is the history of all revolutions. Well, now it has failed, is there anything more to be said? Is not that the whole secret of our meeting here?

Cavour, like Mr. Rhodes, was not in complete agreement with Garibaldi as to the form and moment of the raid. But Cavour profited by Garibaldi's impetuosity, as England might have profited by Dr. Jameson's, and an English Minister, had the Raid succeeded, might have vindicated its justice as Lord John Russell defended that of Cavour and Garibaldi.[1]

It is perhaps not without significance that Mr. Reitz should have cited in condemnation of England's policy in South Africa the very words in which a Russian Chancellor condemned British interference on behalf of the oppressed subjects of King Bomba. The passage on which Mr. Reitz, in his entertaining rhapsody on 'A Century of Wrong,' relies runs as follows:[2]

We would understand that, as a consequence of friendly forethought, one Government should give advice to another in a benevolent spirit—that such advice might even assume the character of exhortation; but we believe that to be the furthest limit allowable. Less than ever can it now be allowed in Europe to forget that Sovereigns are equal amongst themselves, and that it is not the extent of territory, but the sacred character

[1] It is interesting to record that Count Vitzthum called Lord John Russell's despatch 'le monument le plus curieux d'une littérature diplomatique tout-à-fait nouvelle.'

[2] 'A Century of Wrongs,' p. 82.

of the rights of each, which regulates the relations that exist between them. To endeavour to obtain from the King of Naples concessions as regards the internal government of his States by threats or by menacing demonstration is a violent usurpation of his authorities and an attempt to govern in his stead. It is an open declaration of the right of the strong over the weak.

Mr. Reitz got his information from a footnote to a passage in the 'Life of the Prince Consort,' to which one would have thought an advocate in his position was hardly wise in calling attention. The text of the passage is as follows:[1]

The state of the Italian Peninsula was at this time far from satisfactory. Untaught by the past, the Governments there had reverted to the system of administration which had provoked the revolutions of 1848, and were thus rapidly preparing the way for future convulsions. To this state of things as it affected Central and Northern Italy England could not be indifferent, menacing as it was to the peace of Europe, inasmuch as any insurrectionary movement could scarcely fail to bring Sardinia, Austria, and France into collision. In the case of Southern Italy, the British Government had felt bound to be more than silent spectators of what was going on, and they had joined with France in repeated remonstrances with the Government of Naples at the violation of humanity and justice in the arrest and treatment of political and other prisoners, and at other abuses of their administrative system, which, besides being disgraceful in themselves, were continually giving rise to disputes directly affecting the subjects and the interests of both England and France. Finding these remonstrances not merely fruitless, but rejected in a spirit of defiance, the French and English Governments, towards the end of October of this year (1856), resorted to the extreme step of withdrawing their Legations from Naples, in order to mark in the strongest manner their disapproval of a system of government with which it was impossible to maintain friendly relations.

Russia, indeed, protested, but in the very same footnote from which Mr. Reitz has extracted the terms of this remonstrance Sir Theodore Martin states:

Neither Austria, intimately allied as she was with the Neapolitan Court, nor Prussia, thought it necessary to take public notice of it. But Russia issued a remonstrance in the form of a circular addressed by Prince Gortschakoff to the diplomatic agents of the Czar at foreign Courts, in which a principle was laid down as of universal application which certainly had not been adhered to at St. Petersburg in at least one memorable instance.[2]

The conduct of Mr. Rhodes in connection with the abortive revolution in Johannesburg, of which the Jameson Raid was a most unfortunate episode, must be judged in connection with the grievances of the Uitlanders. I find it

[1] 'Life of the Prince Consort,' vol. iii., p. 510.

[2] That is, Turkey.

impossible to agree with the passages in the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, which unreservedly condemned Mr. Rhodes, unless I involve in the same condemnation those who invited William of Orange to assist in the deposition of James II., those who approved and abetted in the despatch of the foreign legions to the assistance of Queen Christina, and those who exalt to the position of heroes the great statesmen Cavour, Garibaldi, and Mazzini. The report of the Select Committee says:[1]

> Whatever justification there might have been for action on the part of the people of Johannesburg, there was none for the conduct of a person in Mr. Rhodes' position in subsidizing, organizing, and stimulating an armed insurrection against the Government of the South African Republic, and employing the forces and resources of the Chartered Company to support such a revolution. He seriously embarrassed both the Imperial and Colonial Governments, and his proceedings resulted in the invasion of the territory of a State which was in friendly relations with Her Majesty, in breach of the obligation to respect the right to self-government of the South African Republic under the Conventions between Her Majesty and that State. Although Dr. Jameson went in without Mr. Rhodes' authority, it was always part of the plan that these forces should be used in the Transvaal in support of an insurrection. Nothing could justify such a use of such a force, and Mr. Rhodes' heavy responsibility remains, although Dr. Jameson at the last moment invaded the Transvaal without his direct sanction.

Whether or not we condemn Mr. Rhodes' political conduct, it is absurd to pretend that his error of judgment, if such it was, involved any stain upon his personal honour. For admitting so elementary a truth in his place in the House of Commons, Mr. Chamberlain has been censured by the advocates and the apologists for the Boer cause. It is even suggested, though quite falsely, that Mr. Chamberlain's declaration was extracted from him by threats of revelations of his complicity in the Raid. It does not seem to have struck the simple persons who allow themselves to be impressed by this nonsense that we should long since have had from Mr. Chamberlain's enemies all these revelations if there was anything to reveal.

Mr. Rhodes did no more than, if he did as much as, the Whig lords who invited the Prince of Orange to assist the revolution in England.

[1] Select Committee, p. xvi.

A formal invitation (says Macaulay), transcribed by Sidney, but drawn up by some person more skilled than Sidney in the art of composition, was despatched to the Hague. In this paper William was assured that nineteen-twentieths of the English people were desirous of a change, and would willingly join to effect it, if only they could obtain the help of such a force from abroad as might secure those who should rise in arms from the danger of being dispersed and slaughtered before they could form themselves into anything like military order.[1]

This invitation bore the signatures of Shrewsbury, Devonshire, Danby, Lumley, Compton, Russell, and Sidney. The moral responsibility of Mr. Rhodes for all that happened in the South African Republic in 1895-96 was no greater and no less than that attached to the bearers of these distinguished Whig names in 1678. And while I am citing Macaulay, let me note another passage in his essay on Mackintosh's 'War of the Revolution,' which has a distinct bearing upon much of the criticism passed upon the effects of the Jameson Raid.

It has been the fashion (he wrote in the *Edinburgh Review*) to represent the excitement of this period as the effect of the Popish plot. To us it seems that the Popish plot was rather the effect than the cause of the general agitation. It was not the disease, but a symptom, though, like many other symptoms, it aggravated the severity of the disease. In 1660 or 1661 it would have been utterly out of the power of such men as Oates or Bedloe to give any serious disturbance to the Government. . . . In 1678 and 1679 there would have been an outbreak if those men had never been born. For years things had steadily been tending to such a consummation. Society was one vast mass of combustible matter. No mass so vast and so combustible ever waited so long for a spark.

With regard to the consequential actions of Mr. Rhodes, it is obvious that our judgment upon them must follow the verdict on the main issue. This was vaguely appreciated by the members of the Select Committee.

> Such a policy, they say, once embarked upon, *inevitably involved Mr. Rhodes in grave breaches of duty*, to those to whom he owed allegiance. He deceived the High Commissioner representing the Imperial Government. He concealed his views from his colleagues in the Colonial Ministry[2] and from the Board of the British South Africa Company, and led his subordinates to believe that his plans were approved by his superiors.

[1] 'History of England,' vol. ii., p. 410.

[2] I believe that Mr. Rhodes in refusing to take his colleagues into his confidence was actuated chiefly, if not exclusively, by the desire to involve none but himself in disaster, should disaster be the consequence of his policy. The italics in the quotation are mine.

If it is to be laid down as a hard and fast rule, to which there is no exception, that conspiracy, like rebellion, is as the sin of witchcraft, then, of course, Mr. Rhodes and all the other conspirators to whom I have referred stand self-condemned. But Englishmen are the last people in the world to condemn with a clear conscience all concerted and secret action against established authority. If we admit that conspiracy may be justified by circumstances, we shall also be constrained to allow that the secrecy and deception which are the conditions of successful conspiracy are not infringements of the moral law. The very act of a secret combination is in itself a piece of deception. Even the punishment of traitors by conspirators is an essential corollary of conspiracy. The distinguished men who signed the letter of invitation to the Prince of Orange undoubtedly deceived their *de jure* Sovereign, and when they told William that nineteen-twentieths of the English population 'were desirous of a change, and would willingly join to effect it,' they, like Mr. Rhodes, led their subordinates to believe that their plans were approved by their superiors. We condemn a man who is guilty of murder, but we do not censure the murderer for the efforts he has adopted to conceal the traces of his crime. All the acts of deception which he practises for that end are incidental to the original crime. We do not prove that a war was an unjust war by demonstrating that the final triumph was secured by stratagem and ruse. An ambuscade is just as much an act of deception as any of the devices adopted by Mr. Rhodes to conceal his plans from those who would have thwarted them. Look at it from whatever point of view we will, we come back to the original proposition that the judgment passed upon Mr. Rhodes must be one determined by our views upon the necessity of interference in the Transvaal. To this it must come sooner or later: if the condition of South Africa did not menace British supremacy; if that supremacy were menaced, and there was reasonable ground for assuming that it would be vindicated by the Imperial authority; if the grievances of the Uitlanders were trivial and such as would be remedied by the natural course of events; if there were other and less objectionable means by which the problem could be solved; if

all these things were true, or if any considerable proportion of them were true, Mr. Rhodes would stand condemned as a politician. But even his condemnation as a politician would not involve a stigma upon his personal honour unless it could be shown that he was actuated by selfish and sordid aims. It becomes, therefore, our duty to examine whether or not the condition of affairs in the Transvaal and in the Cape Colony justified the application of that principle quoted by Lord John Russell from Vattel:

> When the people from good reasons take up arms against an oppressor, it is but an act of justice and generosity to assist brave men in the defence of their liberties.

The only fault which I have to find with Mr. E. T. Cook's most excellent book on 'The Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War' is the underlying assumption that the Raid was not only the monumental act of folly it turned out to be, but that it was disgraceful to all concerned, and brought not altogether deserved ignominy upon the country. To that assumption I altogether demur. I am not even sure that the plan of campaign, as originally contemplated, was altogether devoid of elements of success. That plan clearly was that there should be a revolution in Johannesburg, that the existing Government should be overthrown, and that Dr. Jameson and his force upon the frontier should come to the rescue of the insurrectionists if the Transvaal Government threatened to suppress the revolt by arms. There were moments of hesitation and panic at Pretoria which proved that the considerations upon which the conspirators based their hopes of success were not as bad as they have been assumed to be. I am not, however, concerned with the wisdom or folly of the enterprise, except in so far as it is true that a rebellion, however justifiable in other respects, stands self-condemned of blood-guiltiness if it be taken up without the slightest chance of a successful issue. But I am much concerned to prove that, on the broader grounds of which the Raid was, as it were, an insignificant patch, the whole policy adopted by Mr. Rhodes is defensible by reasons which Englishmen in all ages have respected, applauded, and even adopted. There are several questions which must be answered before

we pass judgment upon the policy for which Mr. Rhodes has been censured by friends and foes alike. (1) What were the rights of British subjects in the South African Republic as guaranteed by the Conventions? (2) Had these rights been respected in spirit as well as in letter by the Government of Mr. Kruger? (3) Did the denial of these rights entail grievances of such a magnitude as to justify in the last resort recourse to extra-constitutional means to remedy them? (4) Had the constitutional means at the disposal of the British Outlanders been exhausted before they resorted to the *ultima ratio* of the oppressed? (5) In countenancing and abetting the revolution in all its branches, was Mr. Rhodes actuated by sordid, personal motives, or by the belief that he was defending Imperial interests which were neglected by their lawful and constitutional custodians? And, lastly, (6) Had Mr. Rhodes himself exhausted other means than those of active participation in a revolutionary movement before he threw in his lot with the Reformers of Johannesburg?

Before I consider these questions separately, I feel bound to call attention to one aspect of the Raid which has been overlooked by most of those who have condemned it the most strongly. Of all the persons implicated in the Raid itself, the two principals were, beyond all question, Dr. Jameson and Colonel Frank Rhodes, the one at Pitsani and the other at Johannesburg. It is not too much to say that the character of these two men puts it beyond reach of cavil that the Raid was not prompted by sordid financial personal considerations. In the whole history of conspiracies, I should think that there was not to be found such a hopeless brace of conspirators as those who, among their innumerable friends, are known as 'Doctor Jim' and 'Frankie Rhodes.' Colonel Rhodes I have not the honour of knowing personally, but the testimony of all those who enjoy that privilege is unanimous. I will quote the views of one whose impartiality will not be challenged, and who has condemned in severe terms the folly and mischievousness of the Raid:

I may dwell for a moment (says Captain Francis Younghusband)[1] on one pathetic figure for whom no one can be so hard as not to feel some sympathy. It is that of the man who as a boy gained his cricketing

[1] 'South Africa of To-day,' pp. 97, 98.

colours on the playing-fields of Eton; who for years served in one of the finest cavalry regiments of the British Army; who gained a Distinguished Service Order for his gallantry on Herbert Stewart's hard desert march to the relief of Gordon at Khartoum; who is a solitary survivor of Sir Gerald Portal's arduous mission to Uganda; and who, through loyalty to his younger brother, had engaged in an ill-fated scheme in which he had absolutely no personal interest, and which had now brought him, a Colonel in the British Army, to the prisoner's dock to be sentenced to death in a foreign country.[1] Even his enemies, with all their roughness, were able to speak with admiration of the dignity with which he carried himself on this awful occasion, and to say that they understood now what was meant by the term 'an English gentleman.' And among his own countrymen in the Transvaal who knew him at that hard time he is spoken of with a warmth of affection which but few can inspire. But what he must feel even harder than his death sentence, or the imprisonment in Pretoria Gaol, or the fine of £25,000 imposed upon him, or the enforced resignation of his commission in the army, and the consequent blighting of his whole career,[2] is the persistency with which so many of his countrymen still believe that he and the other leaders were guilty of disloyalty to Dr. Jameson in not going out to meet him.

This is not the sort of man who is chosen for, or who accepts, the leadership of a Stock Exchange plot or the conduct of a disgraceful conspiracy against honourable and unsuspecting opponents.

The leader at the other end was a man of a type which is very rare anywhere, but which is perhaps more often found among Anglo-Saxons than in any other race. Dr. Jameson had abandoned a lucrative practice to devote himself to his lifelong friend, Cecil Rhodes. Living in an atmosphere which is usually fatal to the finer instincts of men, Dr. Jameson cared absolutely nothing about that wealth which those about him sought for, schemed for, lived for, prayed for, dreamed of, and were ready to die for. He had unrivalled opportunities of enriching himself, not only easily, but without incurring the faintest suspicion of having won his riches unworthily. The stream of Pactolus flowed past his feet, and he never troubled himself to stretch out his hand even to secure a modest cupful. He was a poor man when he went to South Africa, and he is a poor man to-day, and is far from likely to swell the receipt for death duties when he passes away.

I who have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Jim, as well as one knows nine-tenths of one's acquaintances and friends,

[1] This, of course, was written at the time of the trial of the Reformers.
[2] Fortunately unrealized.

feel it difficult not to laugh outright when I hear him spoken of as the willing and unscrupulous tool of grasping capitalists. I laugh, too, retrospectively when I think of Dr. Jameson in the rôle of a conspirator in a plot. For my own part, he is the last man in the world that I should choose to conduct an intrigue, however harmless in character, which in its execution demanded powers of deception and concealment and a mastery of conflicting emotions. But Dr. Jameson is the first man I should call for were I in a tight place from which I could only be extricated by unflinching valour, by unshakable determination, and by the most unselfish and devoted loyalty. Men of this type perpetrate blunders which are crimes, but they are incapable of committing crimes which inspire disgust or despair of human nature. And to these men, to Frankie Rhodes and Dr. Jim, it is impossible to impute any knowledge of or sympathy with a sordid Stock Exchange venture such as ignorant and malevolent critics have described the Raid to be.

I now turn to the consideration of the questions which I have enumerated. The first is, What were the rights of British subjects in the Transvaal?

As has been shown in the preceding chapter, Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, Du Toit, and others, based the rights of the Transvaal to be regarded as a Sovereign Independent State upon the Sand River Convention of 1852. Apart from the fact that this Convention was abrogated by the annexation of 1877 and by the subsequent Conventions of 1881 and 1884, it is clear that the Sand River Convention did not confer sovereign independence upon the South African Republic. The governing clause, which was the first,

> guaranteed in the fullest manner on the part of the British Government to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal River the right to manage their own affairs, and to govern themselves according to their own laws without any interference on the part of the British Government, and that no encroachment should be made by the said Government on the territory north of the Vaal River; with the further assurance that the warmest wish of the British Government was to promote peace, Free Trade and friendly intercourse with the emigrant farmers then inhabiting, or who might thereafter inhabit, that country, it being understood that this system of non-interference was binding upon both parties.

The clauses were drafted by assistant Commissioners,

who had evidently no knowledge of the forms of diplomatic instruments. By the Sand River Convention many of the privileges and the responsibilities of a Sovereign Power were devoluted to the emigrant farmers. But the whole wording of the clause implied a retention of the sovereignty. There is nothing to convey an abandonment of allegiance to the Crown such as a few years later was expressly stipulated for in the Convention which constituted the Orange Free State a sovereign international State. It would have been quite superfluous to specify the privileges to be enjoyed by citizens of an independent State, and the inference, therefore, is that, while certain rights were specifically granted to the persons loosely described as the emigrant farmers, 'these rights belong inherently to all British subjects who settled in the Transvaal.'

This point, however, has but a historic and academic interest, because by the act of annexation all the inhabitants without exception became British subjects, and their ultimate status was regulated by the Convention of 1881, modified by that of 1884. The preamble to the Convention states that—

> Her Majesty's Commissioners for the settlement of the Transvaal territory . . . do hereby undertake and guarantee on behalf of Her Majesty that, from and after the eighth day of August, 1881, complete self-government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, will be granted to the *inhabitants*[1] of the Transvaal territory upon the following terms and conditions.

Article XII. provided that

> 'no person who has remained loyal to Her Majesty during the recent hostilities shall suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty, or be liable to any criminal prosecution or civil action for any part taken in connection with such hostilities, and all such persons will have full liberty to reside in the country, with enjoyment of all civil rights and protection for their person and property.'

Article XXVI. stated that

> 'all persons other than natives conforming themselves to the laws of the Transvaal State (*a*) will have full

[1] The italics are mine.

liberty with their families to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the Transvaal State; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (*d*) they will not be subject in respect to their persons or property or in respect of their commerce or industry to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon Transvaal citizens.'

In the substituted Convention of 1884, the articles defining the status of persons not citizens of the South African Republic remained unchanged. And that there was no doubt in the minds of the Triumvirate as to the complete equality of all inhabitants, whether burghers or British subjects, is proved by the often-quoted dialogue between the British Commissioners and the Triumvirate at Newcastle on May 10, 1881. The official report thus records it:

Sir Hercules Robinson: Before annexation, had British subjects complete freedom of trade throughout the Transvaal?

Mr. Kruger: They were on the same footing as the burghers. There was not the slightest difference, in accordance with the Sand River Convention.

Sir Hercules Robinson: I presume you will not object to that continuing?

Mr. Kruger: No; there will be equal protection for everybody.

Sir Evelyn Wood: And equal privileges?

Mr. Kruger: We make no difference so far as burgher rights are concerned. There may perhaps be some slight difference in the case of a young person who has just come into the country.

The importance of this admission must have been brought to the attention of the Triumvirate, for Dr. Jorrisen explained on May 26 that

What Mr. Kruger intended to convey was this: According to our law, a newcomer has not his burgher rights immediately. The words 'young person' do not refer to age, but to the time of residence in the Republic. According to our old Grondwet, you had to reside a year in the country.

Now, it is clear from all this that the position of British subjects in the Transvaal was clearly understood by the Triumvirate. In the first place, if they were inhabitants they enjoyed all the rights which were conferred by the Convention of 1881. In the second place, it was expressly

stipulated that there should be no difference in taxation between burghers on the one hand and those who did not care to take up their citizenship on the other. The bearing of this upon subsequent events has been very imperfectly appreciated. International instruments cannot from the nature of things be construed with that strict adherence to verbal interpretation which is found convenient in our courts of law. They have to be read and interpreted in the light of the circumstances which prevailed when they were contracted. It is undeniable, therefore, that one of the main provisions of the Convention of 1881 was that by which equality of taxation was secured for burghers and non-burghers alike. That provision is specified in Article XXVI. of the 1881 Convention, which became Article XIV. of the 1884 Convention, and it runs, as we have seen:

> All persons other than natives . . . will not be subject in respect of their persons or industry to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon Transvaal citizens.

Under this article any taxation imposed by the Executive must hit every person resident in the Transvaal with equal force. At that time the Transvaal was practically a purely agricultural country. The revenue necessary for the purposes of the Government had to be raised either by a direct poll-tax levied on all inhabitants indifferently, or by duties imposed upon articles of consumption which were bought by all classes, according to their means. When, however, gold was discovered in inexhaustible quantities in the Transvaal, the whole burden of taxation was transferred from the burghers who were agriculturists to the Uitlanders, who were an industrial population. The whole basis of equality prescribed by the Conventions was destroyed. Only such articles of consumption were taxed upon a high scale as were necessaries of life to the miners on the Rand. It is ridiculous to argue that these duties would have affected the burghers had the articles taxed been consumed by them. As a matter of fact, of course, it was only such things as were necessarily consumed by the miner, and were not wanted by the burgher, that bore the whole weight of indirect taxation. And the same reasoning applies to the question of the

franchise. Interpreted as such international documents must be interpreted, it is again undeniable that the Transvaal Triumvirate in 1881 undertook to maintain the system which was in vogue before the annexation.

I am quite certain (wrote Sir Henry de Villiers on May 21, 1899) that if in 1881 it had been known to my fellow-Commissioners that the President (of the South African Republic) would adopt his retrogressive policy, neither President Brand nor I would ever have induced them to consent to sign the Convention. They would have advised the Secretary of State to let matters revert to the condition in which they were before peace was concluded—in other words, to recommence the war.

Now, we know from Dr. Jorrisen's exposition of Mr. Kruger's meaning, that no difference so far as burgher rights were concerned was to be made between the Boers and persons coming into the country, except that the franchise would not be accorded until after a specified period of residence, which in the case of the Transvaal before annexation had been one year. There was nothing said or implied about renunciation of nationality. As a matter of fact, there could be no such renunciation in a case where the suzerainty of Her Majesty the Queen was expressly retained. Mr. E. T. Cook has put together in very convenient form the different stages of what he calls reforms backward.

The legislative system of the Republic (he says)[1] had no doubt been reformed within the space of seven years as well as previously, but, unfortunately, the reforms had been, from the Liberal point of view, reforms backward. The principal changes in the alien and franchise laws of the South African Republic were as follows:

1855—All white aliens to enjoy equal rights with other citizens on purchase of the right of citizenship.

1876—Naturalized aliens to enjoy equal rights with citizens. Naturalization obtained by—(1) possession of real property or (2) one year's residence.

1881—Pretoria Convention. The above was the *status quo* at the time of this Convention.

1883—Naturalization only obtainable after five years.

1884—London Convention. The above was the *status quo* at the time of this Convention.

1889-90—The gold rush. The above was still the *status quo*.

1890—The Second Chamber established. Uitlanders to elect thereto after two years, to be eligible after four; but to elect to the First Raad after ten years, and to be eligible after fourteen.

1893—The existing law, as described above.

1894—Children (born in the country) disfranchised unless their fathers took the oath of allegiance.

[1] 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' p. 16.

This system of retrograde reform, it will be observed, was continued up to the Raid. It is in as flagrant conflict with the spirit of the Conventions as was the system of taxation. By the terms of agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Transvaal, an absolute equality was guaranteed to all classes, without distinction, domiciled in the Transvaal. The arrangements with regard to residence were not intended to qualify these conditions. They were practically the same as those which obtained in the British colony. A subject of the King going from the mother-country to Cape Colony or to New Zealand is not eligible for the franchise or for a seat in Parliament until he has concluded one full year of residence. In the same manner, a man is not placed upon the register of voters in England until he has resided in the particular constituency for which he claims a vote for twelve months. It would, however, be preposterous to argue that these regulations were intended to enforce a distinction between different classes in the community. They have been adopted in all civilized countries merely as a safeguard against the falsification of the register or against fraudulent electioneering tactics which might swamp the votes of legitimate electors. In this respect, then, the British Uitlander had not only inherent rights as a British subject, but also special rights secured to him by the Conventions and denied to him by the authorities in the Transvaal.

It should thus be borne in mind that the rights of British subjects in the Transvaal were different from, better defined and less limited than those they enjoyed in any other country not under the direct authority of the Queen. They were (1) inherent because at no time had the inhabitants of the Transvaal been relieved of their allegiance to the Sovereign of the territory recognised as British by international compacts; (2) acquired and guaranteed to them by Conventions between the Imperial Government and the Boer Executive; (3) rights voluntarily conferred, the charter of which was the formal letter from the secretary to the delegates of the Transvaal who came to this country in December, 1883, to arrange for what was known subsequently as the London Convention. It is as follows:

was lavishing large sums of money by way of commissions to the principal members of the Executive Council and of the Legislative Assembly, with a view to obtain the provisional concession. He gave away through Vorster American carriages and watches to the Volksraad. He paid £300 for the portrait in oils of President Kruger now hanging in the chamber of the First Raad at Pretoria, and he gave a great dinner at the Transvaal Hotel. Besides these expenses, a further sum of £8,700 was claimed by Vorster and his friends as having been expended during 1890 in connection with their petition for the concession, and was paid by the Barons,[1] who at a later date, after the floating of the company, recouped themselves from its funds in the sum of 368,000 francs under the heading 'formation expenses' on account of telegrams, and 'many douceurs distributed to people in Africa to interest them in the enterprise.' . . . It is not a little surprising that Baron Eugene should have thought it prudent to accept a privilege founded on so precarious a title. But, if he is to be believed, he not only did so, but paid heavily for it. He avers that he spent on the confirmation of the contract £8,498, in sums varying from £50 to £3,000, as bribes to prominent politicians, besides promising shares to the value of £14,000 more; and he particularizes the scrip assigned to the Vice-President of the Republic, to a member of the Executive Council, and to Mr. Eloff, President Kruger's son-in-law. He complains somewhat plaintively that members of the Transvaal Parliament who were not paid had no hesitation in asking, and he quotes at length a letter from the local Attorney-General, who was not ashamed to plead a temporary embarrassment, and to beg for £200.

In 1892 a letter was addressed from Baron Van den Bogaerde, the Chief Engineer of the Selati Company, to the President of the Board of Directors of the Selati Railway Company at Paris, which in its delightful simplicity reveals the moral atmosphere which prevailed in Pretoria. The following is the translation:[2]

December 3, 1892.

M. LE PRESIDENT,

Last Monday Mr. B. J. Vorster came to see me at my office, and strongly desired to take me to the President to introduce me to him. I refused, saying that I was acquainted with him. On Tuesday I went to the President with Mr. de Jongh to try and get the matter of the debentures passed before he left. Mr. de Jongh will tell you that we failed, but that the President promised us to resume the discussion of your proposals directly after his return, and that of General Joubert—that is to say, about December 27 or 28. The President then made me a pretty warm speech about Mr. Vorster, saying that it was through him and on his account that the matter of the concession of our railway had been decided and resolved; that Mr. Vorster found himself at this moment in need of money, and that he asked us to do our utmost to help him, and not to forget the services rendered by him. I replied to the President that we were always very desirous of being agreeable to him, and I promised him that everything that could be done should be done with that object, and that I was going to write to you upon this subject.

Wednesday morning Mr. Vorster came to see me again. He ex-

[1] There were two of them: Eugene the younger and Robert the elder.

[2] Cd. 623, p. 45.

plained to me that he found himself obliged to repay the sums that he had borrowed to cover the expenses necessitated by the obtaining of the concession of our railway; that he had by contract the right to 6 per cent. of the profit of the sale of the debentures of the company, and that he was going to ask you to advance him a sum upon his rights. He asked me to transmit this demand to you, and to ask for a reply by cable. You will find his letter enclosed.

As it is indispensable for reasons that you will appreciate to be careful of the good intentions of the President towards us, I did not see my way to refuse this request.

If, as I suppose, you will not think fit to agree to it, I take the liberty of asking you to do it with circumspection, to use rather methods of delay than to meet it with a direct refusal; and not to forget that the friendship of the President which we have now gained ought to be retained in the interest of the company, of course, and of its future; and also that the President seems to take in hand the cause of Mr. Vorster in a very special and personal way. I hope to leave for Komati Poort next Tuesday. I do not think my presence there is required for more than three or four days. Since I cannot follow the line further than the Crocodile River, it would be impossible to find there in this season means of transport. Horses and oxen die there of sickness and the fly. But as the journey itself, going and coming, takes eight days, it is likely I shall not be able to write to you by the next mail.

I am, etc.,
(Signed) VAN DER BOGAERDE.

The story of the dynamite concessions as told in Mr. Lyttelton's report should be read in full. It will be found in Blue-book, Cd. 623, pp. 69-95.

It is not the most flagrant instance of the corruption of the Executive in the Transvaal, but it is one of the few cases the history of which can be studied from beginning to end. After all, however, the manifesto of the National Union, issued upon the eve of the Raid, constitutes the indictment of the Transvaal Government. The value of this document is increased by the fact that we have confirmation of its general accuracy from Mr. W. P. Schreiner in the evidence which he gave before the Select Committee.

We have it from Mr. Schreiner that the manifesto of December 27, 1895, was a fair representation of the grievances of the Uitlanders, as they conceived them, and we further gather from the evidence submitted to the Concessions Commission that these grievances were actually such as the Uitlanders conceived them to be. There is an amazing apology put forth in a rather shame-faced way by Radical apologists for the Boer Government. Admitting the truth of these charges of maladministration and cor-

ruption, and the flagrant inequality of the incidents of taxation, they say in effect: Yes, that may be all very true, but the capitalists were making a great deal of money and the workmen were earning very high wages, and so there was nothing much to complain about, and still less to justify a revolution. As a matter of fact, as we shall see presently, the wages of the workmen were not high when the cost of living resulting from the oppressive taxation of the Government was taken into consideration. That, however, is not the point. Injustice is not the less injustice because one may happen to thrive in spite of it. Nobody would pretend that the imposition of the Ship Money by Charles I. would have ruined, or even seriously inconvenienced, any considerable class in England. But our ancestors fought for the principle involved, and in vindication of it they ultimately cut off the King's head. Again, the bitterest Republican in the North American colonies never asserted that either the Stamp Act or the duty upon tea would impose intolerable burdens upon the colonies. What they protested against, and what they successfully rebelled for, was a principle. They asserted that the Parliament of England had no right to impose taxation, however intrinsically just and expedient, upon subjects of the King who were not represented in that Parliament. Follow the history of revolutions up and down, and you will invariably find that in the long-run this question of unfair taxation was at the bottom of them. It is hypocrisy to speak with contempt of 'the trail of finance' being found over all these political difficulties in the Transvaal. Of course it was. People did not go to the Transvaal because of its attractions as what the auctioneers would call a 'desirable residential country,' nor because they wished, out of sheer goodness of heart, to help the benighted Boers to exploit the wealth which they were either too lazy or too unintelligent to extract from the soil themselves. They went there for the reasons which prompt nine hundred and ninety-nine emigrants out of a thousand to leave their own country. In a word, they settled in the Transvaal for the sole, respectable, and avowed object of making money. When they found that a considerable portion of the money they made was unjustly extracted from them by a Govern-

ment in which they were quite unrepresented, and which they knew to be corrupt, they rebelled, as most Europeans and all Anglo-Saxons would have rebelled in like circumstances.

I come now to the third question: Had the Uitlanders exhausted every constitutional means in their power before they made up their minds to adopt revolutionary methods?

It is quite true that the existence of grievances is not in itself a sufficient justification for taking up arms, or even threatening to take up arms, against constituted authorities. Revolutionists must prove to the world that, before they had recourse to the *ultima ratio* of free men, they had tried, and tried in vain, every expedient within the Constitution. On this point there really can be no question whatever of the patience displayed by the mass of the Uitlanders. The great mass of the British Uitlanders belonged to the artisan class, who, nurtured in an atmosphere of freedom, hardly knew what real revolution meant.[1] They and their fathers, and their fathers before them, had struggled to obtain the franchise, and in the struggle there had been occasional riots; but these riots always met with disapproval from the more earnest reformers, and admittedly retarded the movement in which they were interested. The British Uitlander's traditions and personal experience suggested to him that the natural way to reform lay in agitation, the presentation of addresses, and constant constitutional pressure upon the powers that be. But of revolution, as understood in the constitutional sense, they never dreamed until it was borne in upon them that by no other means could they secure themselves from being degraded to the position of helots. On this question we have the opinion of a disinterested American whose predisposition was certainly not towards the English. Mr. Poultney Bigelow had a very exaggerated

[1] *Cf.* Napoleon III.'s conversation with Lord Malmesbury in 'The Memoirs of an ex-Minister,' vol. i., p. 103. Napoleon said: 'We (that is, the English) did not make sufficient allowance for the Revolution of 1848, which prostrated the country and was felt by all France to be only the forerunner of the reign of terror prepared for 1852 by Mazzini and Louis Blanc; that it was natural for John Bull, who had never seen a drop of blood shed, and read of 1688 as a romance, to enjoy the diatribes of the *Times* over his breakfast, and, calling him a tyrant, not to perceive that, whatever he (Napoleon) was, he was the *consequence of the events* of 1848.'

idea of the characters of President Kruger and of President Steyn and of the Boers. Yet he tells us:

A law against treason (he tells us) was introduced into the Transvaal Constitution obviously because it sounded well, and was not expected to injure anyone. The Boers have been hatched in treason, have grown fat on it, and a charge of treason in the Transvaal is a mere figure of speech suggesting political disapproval. The word would never have appeared in the Boer Constitution had not some of its framers conceived the notion that it would look rather well to incorporate a line or two of old Dutch law, just as your Parliamentary windbag throws in a Latin quotation now and then by way of proclaiming that he has enjoyed a gentleman's education. So idle was the charge of treason regarded that it was made punishable by a fine of £37 10s.—say the price of a horse. Treason in the Transvaal down to the moment of the Jameson Raid was looked upon as a misdemeanour equivalent to borrowing a neighbour's water-melon. The handful of Boer trekkers in 1836 had scarcely got away from Cape Colony before they commenced disintegration and constructive treason. Those who went to Natal, those who settled in the Orange Free State, and those who finally framed the thirty-three articles at Potchefstrom on April 9, 1844, not only represented three seceding States, but within each of these individual groups reserved to themselves the right to resent any act of government which they did not specifically approve of. Indeed, when, on January 5, 1857, the great Pretorius was elected President of the Transvaal and a more complete Constitution was adopted, a large section of the burghers defied this Government, and started an opposition republic at Leydenburg. The burghers took the field, and there was a three-cornered rebellion involving the republics of Leydenburg, Potchefstrom, and the Orange Free State. The intricacies of this rebellion are too many to follow at present, but it was settled by bringing to trial for high treason the worst of the rebels. His whole punishment was a fine of £150. Other traitors were punished in smaller sums, mostly about £25 apiece. Paul Kruger was one of the Commandants who represented the outraged majesty of the Transvaal Government in 1857, and perhaps bore the events of this year in mind when he consented to the monstrous penalties imposed upon the Johannesburg Reformers of 1896. . . . We must remember that the citizens (of Johannesburg) cherished no treason—at least, from a Boer, American, or even an English, point of view. They represented pretty much all the intelligence of the country, all the industrial machinery, more than half the landed property, and they paid nearly the whole of the taxes. It was not an English rebellion against Dutch domination, but it was a union of Americans, Afrikanders, English—in short, every white man who was not an official of the Boer Government, and who had any property at stake, was heartily in favour of a reform in the Government. Every mine of any consequence had an American manager. The machinery used was mostly American, and, aside from the political problems, the situation was one which in its industrial and economic phases was as important to the United States as to any other Power. The Boers from the very outset of their constitutional career confessed their incapacity for administering a modern State by enacting in their constitution that revenue was to be raised by the abominable medieval practice of selling monopolies. The political economy of Spain in the days of Philip II. was applied by Paul Kruger of 1896 to a community of the most modern and progressive manufacturers ever assembled together in one spot. One man by jobbing or favouritism

would secure the exclusive right of making blasting powder, or paper, or brandy—it matters little what. The system opened the door to every species of bribery, and the producing class were made not merely to pay very high prices for what they needed, but they were made to put up with very inferior articles.

The treason of Johannesburg has never been directed, as so many Boer treasons, to the overturning the head of the State. No important body of Johannesburgers has gone further than to demand the fulfilment by the Boers of their plain obligations under the Convention with England to the Paramount Power. It is a monstrous anomaly that *bonâ fide* alien settlers in such a Republic as the Transvaal should be forbidden to carry arms, and forbidden to exercise the franchise, that they should have to submit to censorship in the matter of the press, and even private telegrams, that would hardly be tolerated in Germany. It is still more monstrous that the hostile legislation of this country should be guided, not by Boers or even Afrikanders of other nationalities, but by a Governmental ring of Hollanders who are out of sympathy with the great body of white people in Africa, and who necessarily feel that their tenure of office depends upon the degree to which they can stimulate fear of the Boer for his independence. The presence of so many imported Hollanders is another evidence of the Boer incapacity for managing his own affairs. The Transvaal has grown rich by the earnings of an alien population to which she has made no adequate return. Excellent public-spirited reformers like John Hays Hammond and Lionel Phillips she has treated as malefactors, sentenced them first to be hung, then changed this ridiculous penalty into one of long imprisonment in a loathsome gaol, and finally pardoned them in consideration of their paying each of them a bigger fine than would have been demanded from any dozen Boer traitors of the most extreme kind. Each of the Reform prisoners should have received the thanks of the Transvaal Republic for the good that they strove to accomplish.[1]

This was not in any way originally an agitation approved of, and still less stimulated, by the capitalists and their agents. On the contrary, they were opposed to political agitation, as likely to interfere with their success in business. In a speech made by Mr. Wessels, an Afrikander of Afrikanders, at so late a date as July 15, 1894, he complained bitterly of the indifference of the capitalists.

Who (he asked) were the people who were politically apathetic? First of all the court minions, the gentlemen who assembled at six o'clock in the morning at the President's house to obtain some favour for themselves or their friends. The subsidized men who procured those favours were a worthless crowd, and need not be reckoned with. The next was the large capitalist. It was a pitiful thing that there were so many large capitalists. If the capital was more equally divided, there would be less political apathy. These men stood like misers over their hoards, and were afraid to utter a voice, and went skulking through the streets of Pretoria. In other countries—in England, for instance—capitalists were in the vanguard of freedom. Here they were barely like the curs that followed a leader. Were they wise, and did they not see the sword hanging

[1] 'White Man's Africa,' pp. 316, 317.

over their heads? Did they not know that the capital they annexed might be annexed by somebody else? The sooner they awakened to the danger their capital was in, the better for themselves. Then there was another and a very large crowd of people who said they did not meddle in politics because it was too much trouble, and they preferred their comfort lying on a sofa reading a novel and smoking a cigar. He had hoped, at any rate, one of this class would be aroused from its political apathy and exclaim:

> 'A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine:
> Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!'[1]

The famous letters of Mr. Phillips of the summer of 1894, of which garbled extracts appear in the Transvaal Green-book, show the attitude of the capitalists up to so late a date as fifteen months before the abortive revolution.

I do not, of course (he said in a letter to Mr. Beit of June, 1894), want to meddle in politics; and as to the franchise, do not think many people care a fig about it.

And he goes on to call the attention of his capitalist colleagues in England to the agitation which had then been carried on for some two years by the working classes.

If events fulfil appearances (he writes), it means ultimate frightful loss to the industry, or revolution. Now, of course, our main object is to avoid both. The gold-fields people[2] urge me to go down to Cape Town and talk over matters with Rhodes. I felt inclined to do this, but two considerations deter me. Firstly, if it were for a moment conjectured that I had approached Rhodes, I should incur the most virulent revenge from the Government, and perhaps justly; and, secondly, should I be wise to trust Rhodes' advice? If you trust Rhodes and cable 'See Rhodes,' I will run down.

A little later he writes to the same correspondent:

It seems that the British Government[3] means to have a say here, and it is about time. What I fear is that they may put the brake on one thing, and we may be more pressed by some development of the Government in another direction. The Government is absolutely rotten, and we must have reform. The alternative is revolution or English interference. Kruger seems beyond himself, and imagines he is guided by Divine will.

In August of the same year he wrote:

I will also see whether it is possible, without creating unnecessary alarm here, or active steps in Pretoria, to get companies to possess themselves of a few rifles, etc. One thing is certain: The Boer prowess is much overrated since they licked our troops, and in the Malaboch campaign they distinguished themselves by making the Pretoria con

[1] *Cape Times*, July 16, 1894.
[2] The Consolidated Gold-Fields Company.
[3] Lord Rosebery's Government.

tingent do any of the risky business,[1] and appear generally to have behaved themselves badly. If they knew there were three thousand or so well-armed men here, there would be less talk—anyhow, less real danger of wiping out Johannesburg upon occasions like the recent incident. In addition to that, we can never tell when some complication with England may arise, and this place ought to be prepared to hold its own for a few days at least. If the spending of money does not bring reform, the only alternative is force, and that will come in time.

There were two courses open to the Uitlanders to secure redress from their grievances in what is known as a constitutional manner. The first was to induce the President and the Raad to modify the impossible conditions under which they lived. In 1890 Johannesburg suffered from a variety of evils, of which the general misgovernment and the impending hostile legislation with regard to the franchise were the chief. President Kruger made a speech in the Wanderers' Hall, the tone of which was most offensive to the Uitlanders. In the evening of that day a demonstration took place beside the house in which he was residing, and the Transvaal flag was pulled down from the Government buildings and torn to pieces. It was an unfortunate incident, but one such as occurs in most countries when public opinion is much excited. Kruger, however, left the town, swearing he would never revisit it, and from that time forth declared open war against the new-comers. Very shortly after this incident he made a speech at Krugersdorp to a meeting composed largely of Uitlanders. His exordium ran as follows, 'Burghers, friends, thieves, murderers, new-comers, and others,' and in private conversation he never concealed his hatred of the people whose resources were furnishing the revenues of his country. In 1892 the National Union was formed, which, as we have seen, was looked upon with anything but favour by the capitalists, and was the result of a combination of working men such as would be formed for similar purposes in any European or American State. The objects of the Union, as set forth in its constitution, were: (1) The maintenance of the independence of the Republic, and (2) the obtaining of a reasonable share in the government of the country. In the words of Messrs. Scoble and Abercrombie:[2]

[1] The Pretoria contingent was composed almost exclusively of Uitlanders.
[2] 'The Rise and Fall of Krugerism,' p. 111.

This programme proves that this body was formed on purely republican lines, so that it appealed to the progressive minority among the Boers. This section acknowledged the leadership of General Joubert, and the moving spirit of the party was Ewald Esselen, formerly one of the Judges, and subsequently State Attorney, of the Transvaal, a remarkably fascinating man, whom everyone liked outside of politics, in which he subsequently cut a very sorry figure. As the presidential election was coming off shortly, to be followed by many elections for the Volksraad, it was resolved that a determined effort should be made to get a progressive Government into power. To this end thousands of pounds were subscribed by the more enlightened of the capitalist class, who had long feared the grasping tactics of the Kruger party. Mr. Kruger's election fund was also swelled, the foreigners and the Jews putting their money on him. Everything turned on the change of President. Mr. Kruger was able to secure a nominal majority at the poll (over General Joubert), which was turned into a reality by the action of Mr. Schalk Burger,[1] a Joubertite (one of the commission to inquire into the election), who ratted and voted for the return of Kruger. The Joubertites were frantic with rage; one of them, subsequently a member of the second Volksraad, said, in the writer's presence, he would willingly pay a thousand pounds to the man who would shoot the President. They implored Joubert to refuse to submit, and to fight it out if necessary; but the General, who was as weak as water, decided that, however great the sacrifice, he could not consent to divide the country on the issue.

Prior to these elections the National Union approached the President with a request for an extension of the franchise.

It was on this occasion that Kruger said privately, with great display of anger, to the members of the deputation: 'Go back and tell your people I shall never give them anything, I shall never change my policy; and now let the storm burst.'[2]

How the elections were conducted may be gathered from the following account, which was written by Miss Flora Shaw for the '*Times* History of the War':

Kruger had all the advantage of his official position, and used it to the full with an energy and unscrupulousness that compel admiration. The Landdrost and Field-Cornets were almost everywhere his creatures, and the machinery of local government and the registration of voters were thus entirely in his hands. The reactionary majority of the Transvaal clergy threw themselves strongly on his side against Joubert, who professed comparatively Liberal views on religious matters. All Hollanderdom and concessionairedom contributed their quota to pay for the defence of the interests vested in the Kruger régime. The formation of election committees was, by resolution of the Volksraad, simply forbidden to the general public, but Kruger had the whole Civil Service as an election committee for himself. Everything that could make it safe and advantageous to vote on his side was done; nothing that could make it dangerous and disadvantageous to vote for General Joubert was left

[1] The present so-called Acting President of the Transvaal.
[2] '*Times* History of the War,' vol. i., p. 137.

undone. Officials who expressed progressive sympathies were dismissed for showing partisanship. Mr. Keith, proprietor of the *Transvaal Advertiser*, was flung into gaol on a charge of high treason for venturing to assert that the President had been using public moneys for election purposes. The general election for the first Volksraad immediately preceded the presidential election. Kruger took steps to secure the return of his own supporters to the Raad. The law provided that in cases of disputed elections the old members should continue till the question was settled. Accordingly, whenever an old Krugerite was defeated, some trivial objection was raised which enabled him to retain his seat and help to decide appeals both on the Raad and the presidential elections. Joubert's supporters were shamelessly unseated, and their appeals were quashed.[1]

This constitutional effort to secure a more Liberal Parliament was an almost ludicrous failure. Mr. Rhodes, when questioned upon the incident of this election by Mr. Blake, said:

To be quite fair (and others will confirm it), I think that one or two of those whom they (the Uitlanders) had returned and done their best for, as soon as they got into the Raad, were worse than the ones they turned out.

And speaking of the conditions generally before the extra-constitutional movement was determined upon, he said:

They (the Uitlanders) had their huge petition claiming their rights, and they used to have meetings of the National Union. And then they had gone on for years even before that continually claiming their rights, and I think that it was the hopelessness of getting anything. They had continual promises, but they were never fulfilled, and all they found was that extra concessions were given which were detrimental to the industry, and I think it was having despaired of getting any change constitutionally that they finally resolved to arm, and in the last resort to fight for their rights.[2]

Mr. Rhodes, in the course of his examination, quoted the speech of Judge Esselen on November 10, 1892, in which the Judge said:

I wish to ask you whether you can give credence to the statement of Mr. Kruger when he says he will work for the unity of the two races, Dutch and British. The whole of his acts for the last ten years show it is absolutely untrue. I say you have been kept out of your political privileges, not because the burghers have kept you out from fear that your being granted these privileges would wreck or endanger the independence of the Transvaal, but to enable a few—and a greedy few—to rule this country for their own ends.[3]

[1] '*Times* History of the War,' vol. i., p. 138.
[2] Select Committee, p. 48. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 100.

It would be easy to cite evidence upon evidence proving the absolute inutility of seeking redress by means of agitation. There was, then, the other alternative, that of appealing to the representative of the paramount Power to insist upon the observation of the spirit and letter of the Conventions. They took this step, and on the occasion of the visit of Sir Henry (afterwards Lord) Loch to Pretoria in 1894, representations were made to him on this subject. The ostensible object of Lord Loch's visit was to secure British subjects from being commandeered compulsorily. At that time President Kruger was so apprehensive of a revolution in Johannesburg that he wrote a letter to the High Commissioner, begging him not to visit Johannesburg. The letter ran as follows:

PRETORIA,
June 26, 1894.

DEAR SIR HENRY,

I wish to ask you in the interests of the friendly relations between the two countries not to visit Johannesburg. A certain party (to which, by a long way, not all British subjects belong) has greatly stirred up some feelings. There is, therefore, a certain excitement on various sides whereby it would not be impossible that a collision would arise, to bear the responsibility of which would be a serious matter. It would be very agreeable to me personally, and would be regarded by my Government as an act of international friendship, if you would give up your intended journey to Johannesburg.

To this letter Sir Henry Loch replied on June 27:

DEAR PRESIDENT KRUGER,

I need scarcely assure your Honour that it is my anxious desire to assist, as far as possible, in allaying the excitement which I am aware exists in Johannesburg and in other parts of the Transvaal where British subjects are residing. In conveying to you this desire, I am encouraged by your frankness to be equally frank with your Honour, and to explain the views I have formed from an impartial and perfectly friendly observation of the existing situation. The British subjects appear to me to have some very real and substantial grievances, which have not, I think, received such a sympathetic hearing from the Legislature as the residents of Johannesburg, who are the most important taxpayers in the Republic, consider to be due to any respectful and reasonable representation that they may make.[1] It is not for me to make any detailed suggestion to your Honour on this subject, but I may bring to your notice one consideration which will prove to your Honour the importance of dealing with any grievances that may exist in a sympathetic spirit. There is, I believe, an alien white population at present in the Republic of about 40,000 persons. A few years may see this population almost doubled,

[1] On the reading of the petition of the Uitlanders in the Raad, one of the members said: 'They had better come and fight for these rights. That is the only way they will get them.'

and if they suffer under the same grievances, it would be almost impossible to avert the dangers which have recently threatened. I am sure your Honour will not misunderstand my motives in making these observations; they are made in the spirit of a true friend with a genuine desire to promote the prosperity of the people of this country, and I shall be greatly gratified to learn that any grievances of which British subjects may complain will receive the early consideration of your Honour and your Honour's Government. I readily comply with your wish that I should not visit Johannesburg at the present juncture, and have arranged for the address being presented to me here (Pretoria) by a small deputation of ten or twelve persons.

Sir Henry Loch wrote at the same time to Lord Ripon, who was Colonial Secretary in the Rosebery Cabinet:

The political atmosphere, however, was charged with such an amount of electricity that every moment an explosion was imminent. The legislative and executive enactments which press heavily on the great industry which contributes upwards of a million pounds annually out of a total revenue of a little more than a million and a quarter, without the population that produces this wealth possessing any franchise rights or office in the Government of the country, has created a deep-seated feeling of dissatisfaction, shared alike by the English, American, German, and other foreign residents in the country.

Even Lord Ripon, who, as Lord Salisbury once said of Mr. Gladstone, handled the sceptre of England as if it burned his fingers, recognised the existence of serious grievances. In a despatch to Lord Loch, dated October 19, 1894,[1] he says:

The principal ground for criticising the policy of the Republic is that, whilst for seven years past it has been gaining wealth and strength by the industry, capital, and intelligence of a body of foreigners, who, counting adult males against adult males, now exceed its native population in numbers and greatly exceed them in their contributions to the State, it has been, at the same time, adding to the stringency of the conditions on which the men who compose this new and indispensable element in the body politic can obtain the full right of participating in public affairs which concern them so vitally and which they have influenced so favourably. The period of residence which constitutes the most important condition of naturalization differs in different countries; but there is a very general consensus of opinion amongst civilized States that five years is a sufficiently long period of probation, and Her Majesty's Government would wish you to press on the Government of the Republic the view that the period in this case should not exceed that limit as regards the right to vote in the first Volksraad, which is the dominant body, and in presidential elections. In the absence of any special reasons which are not apparent, it would seem reasonable that the legislation of the Republic should follow that of this and certain other civilized countries in making the qualification for a seat in the legislature identical with the qualification for voting.

[1] C. 7933, p. 93.

And Lord Loch told the House of Lords, with regard to his visit to Pretoria in June, 1894:

> In consideration of the excited state of the city of Johannesburg at that time . . . I felt it to be my duty in the position I filled as Her Majesty's High Commissioner to take steps, if necessary, to protect the lives of the British subjects and property of the British subjects in Johannesburg. The steps I adopted were in connection with an assembly at certain points of the British and Imperial Bechuanaland Police. My intention was that if disturbances had arisen in Johannesburg—disturbances resulting from the administration extended by the Republic towards the Uitlanders in that city—it would have been my duty, I considered, to have informed President Kruger that he would be held responsible for the safety of the lives and property of British subjects in the country. I further conceived it to be my duty to inform President Kruger, that if he had failed to provide the necessary protection for the lives and property of British subjects, I should have felt myself at liberty to have taken such steps as I may have felt expedient to give that protection which he had failed to give.

It may be remarked in passing that these intentions of Lord Loch in 1894 were only distinguishable from those countenanced by Mr. Rhodes in 1895 by the fact that Lord Loch was the representative of the Imperial Government, and Mr. Rhodes, of course, was not. That difference is a great one, but it concerns the relations of Mr. Rhodes and the Imperial Government rather than the moral question involved in posting Dr. Jameson on the 'jumping-off ground.' But what is important to notice in this disclosed attitude of the Imperial authorities, until the occurrence of the Raid, is the very scant attention paid to the wrongs of British subjects in a country which was under the suzerainty of the Sovereign. In judging the conduct of the Uitlanders, we must bear in mind that their experience of Imperial protection was, to say the least, discouraging. Events easily forgotten in England are long remembered in outlying parts of the Empire which have suffered from Imperial mismanagement. In 1895 the overwhelming majority of Englishmen had forgotten all about the retrocession of the Transvaal, or, if they remembered it, thrust it out of their minds as quickly as possible as one of those discreditable but irrevocable episodes upon which it is not well for a self-respecting patriot to dwell. Oblivion, however, was not so easy in South Africa. I remember very well my own astonishment at the freshness and keenness of the resentment felt towards

Mr. Gladstone in June, 1895, when I paid a flying visit to Cape Town. One evening at Groot Schuur, seated next a member of Mr. Rhodes' Government at dinner, who by the way was not of English descent, I expressed my amazement at finding so bitter a feeling against Mr. Gladstone after the lapse of so many years. I said to my neighbour that at home we forgot very quickly, and forgave as soon as the offender had died or passed out of active political life. (Mr. Gladstone had given up the premiership a year before.) The Minister said to me: 'I regard this state of feeling with regret, for on the whole I approved of his policy in 1881; but I am bound to say that if Mr. Gladstone paid a visit to South Africa even now, it would tax all our police resources to save him from being mobbed. There is no name which excites so much execration in South Africa as that of Mr. Gladstone, who is held, I believe myself wrongly, to have betrayed the British in South Africa for party purposes at home.'

I have cited this casual conversation merely to illustrate the state of mind of the Uitlanders towards the Imperial Government. They had probably very little faith in the result of appealing to the suzerain Power for redress of their grievances. But, at any rate, they did appeal, and no impartial observer can affirm that they received substantial comfort either from Lord Loch or from his superiors at home. It must be remembered, too, that they knew nothing and could know nothing of the new spirit which Mr. Chamberlain was about to introduce into the Colonial Office. They remembered that the Conservative party had been in power from 1886 to 1892, a period in which their grievances had grown year by year. They had reason to believe from their own experience that, so far as they were concerned, it mattered very little whether a Conservative Tweedledum or a Liberal Tweedledee presided over the Colonial Office. It was not astonishing, therefore, that, after trying constitutional agitation and appeals to the paramount Power, they should have convinced themselves that no way to redress of their grievances lay open to them save that of revolution. They were conscious even at that time that they were numerically at least as strong as the

Dutch population of the South African Republic. In October, 1894, Sir Jacobus de Wet, at the instance of Lord Ripon, estimated the different classes or nationalities in the South African Republic as follows: Transvaalers and Orange Free Staters, 70,861; British subjects, 62,509; other foreigners, 15,558. There is no reason to believe that this return at all over-estimated the numerical strength of the British Uitlander. But it is necessary to bear in mind that, whereas the Dutch population consisted of men with their wives and large families settled upon the soil, the British Uitlanders for the most part were adult males, either unmarried or with wives whom they had not brought with them to South Africa. If, then, what may be called the fighting strength of the Uitlander was greater than that of the burghers, their intellectual and political superiority was of course incalculably more marked. In these circumstances there was no alternative to these men but acceptance of their degraded position without hope of amelioration, or revolution. I do not believe that the historian of the future, if he accepts the unchallenged principles of British historians of the past, will find one word of censure for the determination of the Uitlanders to overthrow the existing régime. And if their right to revolt is acknowledged, it is idle to criticise the morality of the means adopted to secure success for the revolution. So far as the Uitlanders of the Transvaal were concerned, they were exactly in the position of the Whigs who invited co-operation of William of Orange. For the moment I am concerned with the right of Mr. Rhodes to participate in such a movement; but I have not the slightest doubt in my mind of the absolute right of the Uitlanders to seek whatever aid they thought available, so long as they did not call in the assistance of those who were hostile to British supremacy in South Africa. To me there was always something pitiful, and almost contemptible, in the exhibition of self-abasement and humiliation which followed the failure of the Raid. To have put on sackcloth and ashes because of the supreme folly of the arrangements which led to that ignominious collapse I could well understand. I could have sympathized with any who would have flogged Mr. Rhodes, Dr. Jameson, and the leaders of the Reform movement in

Johannesburg for their share in the co-operative incapacity which made us all for a time the laughing-stock of the civilized world. It was the folly of the Raid and not its immorality which ought to have been bemoaned, but for the folly of individuals a nation cannot be held responsible. The vital mistake made by the majority of Englishmen was the confusion of folly with wrong-doing and the quite unnecessary assumption of responsibility for a fiasco with which we had nothing to do. But as there still seems to be a body of intelligent men in this country which holds Mr. Rhodes' share in the farce to have involved us as a nation in responsibility for it, it is necessary to examine that side of the question.

In the preceding chapter I have pointed out how patiently and sedulously he had worked for ten years of his life to secure peace and union in South Africa with the active help and assistance of the Dutch. The taunts levelled at him for his association with the Afrikander Bond are really the justification for his policy in 1895. He had done all that it was in the power of man to do short of sacrificing his flag to win the goodwill and co-operation of the Dutch, and he had done it all in vain. He had fulfilled his part of the bargain with Mr. Hofmeyr. He had succeeded in giving effect to the Dutch policy in domestic affairs within the Cape Colony. He had struggled successfully to eliminate the Imperial factor in the settlement of what he considered exclusively South African concerns. It is true that he had received in return an equivalent for his services to the Dutch. He had by their assistance kept open the road to the North in the teeth of the most bitter antagonism on the part of Mr. Kruger. All these achievements, however, were merely stepping-stones to a great end. That end, as he had avowed over and over again, was the confederation of South Africa under a system of complete local self-government, but indissolubly connected with the British Empire. It was not part of his plan to interfere with the independence of either of the Republics. Their continued existence under their own flags was altogether immaterial to his policy. What was indispensable was that there should be a commercial union of the whole of the States and colonies of South Africa, which should pursue a

common policy for railroad development and the exploitation of the resources of the country, and ultimately the adoption of a universal system of treating the one great problem of South Africa, the Native Question. There was, moreover, an essential condition, without which the realization of his designs was absolutely impossible. There must be an extirpation of international and intercolonial jealousies throughout the land. If there existed, as there did exist, an enclave in the very centre of South Africa, in which one of the two white races was reduced to the condition of helots, while in all the others there was the most absolute equality, there could be no confederation of South Africa on the basis of universal assent. Mr. Rhodes had hoped that the influence of the Afrikander Bond, with which he was allied, would be felt amongst the more progressive burghers of the South African Republic, and would effect a reconciliation between the English and Dutch which would have removed all obstacles to federation. In that hope he was singularly disappointed. Willing as the Afrikander Bond showed itself to co-operate with him in carrying out their common domestic policy, they jibbed at once when it was suggested to them that they should influence their kinsmen in the Transvaal in the direction of a sympathetic treatment of Englishmen. Mr. Rhodes had also tried the effect of personal communication with President Kruger, but from the very day that Mr. Rhodes succeeded in opening what he himself called the Suez Canal of South Africa, namely, the road to the North, Mr. Kruger was his bitter and irreconcilable foe.

There is a speech delivered by General Joubert in 1891 which shows the feeling of even the more progressive of the Transvaalers towards Mr. Rhodes' policy. He was endeavouring to dissuade young burghers who were preparing to trek into Rhodesia. He said:

First of all, my fellow-burghers who are preparing to go to Matabeleland, I must ask you, Why leave the Transvaal? What impels you to do so? What are you going to do there? What do you expect to find there that does not exist in your own country, so blessed by God and Nature? That British troops are going to Matabeleland and further to extend Imperial rule to the Far North in South Africa, or even round the whole world; that they go everywhere so that the fame and honour of their victories and bloody deeds of war may be made known to the world;

that they go in order to bring one territory after the other under the Imperial power of England—this is so natural and such an old habit that nobody need be surprised at it. Therefore let them go. . . . That so many healthy and promising young men from Cape Colony and Natal hearkened to the voice of Mr. Cecil Rhodes calling them to the scene is not unnatural. In the first place, they are already British subjects, sons of British soil, and only follow their Imperial leader, Mr. Rhodes, on his path to extend the British Empire over the whole world, over the whole of South Africa—yes, even over the Transvaal, the Free State, as he himself declared at Kimberley as the Premier of Cape Colony.

And now, my worthy fellow-burghers, what are you going to do? Did not the Voor-trekkers, did not your fathers and mothers, forsake their country, their goods—yes, their all—to escape the British rule? Did they not sacrifice their blood and chattels to throw off the British yoke and dominance and become a free and independent people? Did they not struggle through the wilderness in order to found a free country—the Transvaal—and by doing so procure for you that dear, inestimable treasure of freedom, of independence? And now, my fellow-burghers, will you help to render that work vain? Will you despise all these sacrifices? Will you tread them under foot? Will you go and aid the greatest enemy and underminer of the Afrikander people? Will you commit such treason against our beloved Republic, against our independence? No, worthy countrymen, worthy sons and daughters of the Transvaal, that I cannot, may not believe, and therefore it is an intolerable, unendurable grief for me to learn that burghers are going from Piet Retief and other districts of the Transvaal to Matabeleland, to Mashonaland—the country robbed in the English fashion.[1] People of the Transvaal are weary of their independence; they depart; they forsake the inheritance of their fathers, disregard the sighs and tears of their mothers; they look back at the fleshpots of Egypt, forget the slavery of the British yoke, turn to the golden calf of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, and wish to go to Mashonaland to help to unjustly kill the unoffending Matabele, extend British rule, and hem in and stamp out the Transvaal.

You may say, 'That is not our object.' Yes, I know, my dear friends and fellow-burghers, that is not your object. You do not perceive, but I assure you by all that is holy that will be the end of the work of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, which you are unwittingly aiding. I say that all of you who do not desire to become traitors to and underminers of the independence of the South African Republic, all who do not wish to be false to the true interests of the African people, will not listen to the voice of the charmer, will not go to help to hem in the Transvaal and the Afrikanders with a bond of Imperial dominance which Mr. Rhodes is now drawing round us in the North.[2]

If this letter expressed the views of the more progressive Transvaalers with regard to the aspirations and policy of Mr. Rhodes at the time when the latter was working in harmony with the Afrikander Bond, it is quite obvious that no representations of his at Pretoria would influence the Executive of the Transvaal in the direction of reform.

[1] Compare with this the letter from Joubert to Lobengula, written a year after Majuba ('Transvaal from Within,' p. 56).

[2] Cited in 'Cecil Rhodes' Political Life and Speeches,' p. 257.

Again and again he had held out the olive-branch to Mr. Kruger, and again and again it had been rejected. As long ago as 1887 he had said in the Cape Parliament:

> I am not going to say that you could make a united South Africa to the Zambesi to-morrow, but I do say that this thing could be done gradually by promoting the means to the end. There is an enormous population flocking to the Transvaal. The President of the Transvaal has looked for assistance to the Free State in preference to us, whom he regards as foreigners, and he has deprived us of the franchise; but time will alter that opinion, and we shall share that franchise, and then he will invite the assistance of the colony in a system for governing these enormous mining populations. Let us, then, at once clear away this native question which stands between us and the other States of South Africa.[1]

And in 1888 he had said, speaking of the proposed railway to the gold-fields:

> If we make that railway against the feeling of the Transvaal—that is, of Mr. Paul Kruger—we shall run the risk of stopping our trade from the Transvaal. I do not think any honourable members should consider this question as one of our being dictated to by the Transvaal, when they think of what that man, Paul Kruger, has lost in his efforts to realize his dream of a Republic for his people, and his people alone. I regard him as one of the most remarkable men in South Africa, who has been singularly unfortunate. When I remember that Paul Kruger had not a sixpence in his treasury when his object was to extend his country over the whole northern interior, when I see him sitting in Pretoria with Bechuanaland gone and other lands around him gone from his grasp, and, last of all, when he, with his whole idea of a pastoral Republic, finds that idea vanishing and that he is likely to have to deal with a hundred thousand diggers who must be entirely out of sympathy and touch with him, I pity the man. When I see a man starting and continuing with one object, and utterly failing in that object, I cannot help pitying him. I know very well that he has been willing to sacrifice anything to gain that object of his. If you think it out, it has been a most remarkable thing that, not content with recovering his country, he wished to obtain the whole of the interior for a population of his own, and he has been defeated in this object.[2]

If, then, Mr. Rhodes was to take any part in emancipating the Uitlanders from the thraldom of Paul Kruger, it was quite obvious that his aim would not be accomplished by co-operation with the man whose dream of sovereignty over the interior he had defeated. It was not, as we know, till comparatively late in the day that Mr. Rhodes was even consulted by the ringleaders of the Reform movement at Johannesburg.

In the private diary of Mr. 'Bobby' White, which was also seized on the battle-field at Doornkop, we find

[1] Cited in 'Cecil Rhodes' Political Life and Speeches,' p. 164.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

an extract conveying his impressions formed at a lunch with Mr. Rhodes on Good Friday, April 12, 1895, at which no other guest was present except 'a Dutch farmer of the old type, who helped Rhodes with his election.' The entry in the diary runs as follows:

We talked about Sir T. Shepstone and the annexation of the Transvaal in 1878. Rhodes says the Dutch were anxious to come under the Imperial Government, being practically bankrupt and shockingly misgoverned. He ascribes the failure of the whole affair to Sir O. Lanyon, who conducted the business on 'lines of a second-rate line regiment.' Larees quite agreed, and told me afterwards that the enormous increase of English population in Johannesburg would result in the Transvaal gradually becoming English. Meanwhile the Johannesburg community pay thirteen-fifteenths of the taxation, are absolutely unrepresented, and have no share in the Government. The Boer himself desires a quiet, pastoral life, and hates all progress; even the extension of the railway is distasteful to him. This party is known as the Afrikander Bond, at whose head is Mr. Hofmeyr.

April 14.—Rhodes left the impression on my mind that the colony was very easy to govern and the people pleasant to deal with. I infer that he hoped in time, by force of reason and weight of population, to win over the Transvaal to England, and thus remedy O. Lanyon's mistakes.

It was a little later than this, namely, on June 11, 1885, that I happened to dine with Mr. Rhodes at Grootesschuur at the same time that certain of the Forward party at Johannesburg were my fellow-guests. I well remember, and I have refreshed my memory by reference to a very scanty diary I kept at the time, the words with which Mr. Rhodes greeted one of the principal Reformers, who was afterwards imprisoned at Pretoria. 'Well,' said Mr. Rhodes, 'when are your troubles going to begin in Johannesburg?' 'Not just yet,' was the reply, 'for business is too brisk for men to think of anything else. But things are going from bad to worse, and the crash cannot be long delayed.' 'Well,' said Mr. Rhodes, 'I give it ten years, and then,' he added laughingly, 'I shall be fifty-two.'[1]

[1] I may as well append here an anecdote from my diary of that date told me by the same Reformer. He said that recently he had been out shooting on the Karoo, and, returning very tired, was overtaken by an old Dopper Boer driving his waggon. The Boer offered him a lift, which he accepted. On the way they came upon two vultures so gorged with food that they would hardly stir from under the feet of the oxen. 'That,' said the Boer to my informant, 'is a parable. A few days ago those vultures were lean and gaunt, and now they are so gorged that they can hardly move out of our way. So it is with the Boers. Twenty years ago we were as lean and gaunt as they, and we made a meal upon the Englishmen. Now we are fat and gorged and lazy, but soon we shall be lean and gaunt again, and

There is very little doubt that Mr. Rhodes allowed himself to be rushed by others. This is confirmed by the evidence submitted to the Select Committee. They say:

> There can be no doubt that in the year 1894 and early part of 1895 there existed much discontent and disquiet among the Uitlanders in Johannesburg, owing to the grievances which they considered were inflicted upon them by the law and administration of the South African Republic. It is equally certain that at this period of 1895 there was no general contemplation of an armed insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing by force the Government at Pretoria. This is made apparent by the evidence of Mr. L. Phillips and Mr. C. Leonard. The latter expressly states that there were no resources in arms, money or organization which would have made a revolution possible. In June, 1895, Mr. Rhodes, with Mr. Beit, formed a plan for organizing the discontent at Johannesburg, providing money and arms for the purpose of an insurrection there, and placing a force under Dr. Jameson on the frontier of the Transvaal to assist and support it. Mr. Beit expressly states that the scheme of the insurrection in Johannesburg, and the armed invasion in its support by Dr. Jameson, originated with Mr. Rhodes. . . . It was not till late in October, 1895, that Mr. Rhodes arrived at a definite arrangement with the leaders of the insurrectionary party at Johannesburg as to the proceedings to be taken. Mr. Leonard states the basis of action as follows:
>
> 'The basis of the compact was that Mr. Rhodes should assist us. Originally, I think, as many as 1,200 men were to be on the border. That watered down until finally, just before Dr. Jameson came over the border, I think it was 750. We (the Johannesburgers) were to rise in revolt, seize the Pretoria arsenal and the ammunition from there, retire on Johannesburg and hold the place, and Mr. Rhodes told me the High Commissioner would come up from Cape Town to mediate.' Mr. Rhodes seems also to have assured Mr. Leonard at that time that the Dutch population in Cape Colony would welcome a change.[1]

It is clear from this that Mr. Rhodes' share in the conspiracy was not of very long standing. I have Mr. Rhodes' permission to repeat the substance of a conversation which I had with him at the Burlington Hotel in March, 1897, a day or two before he was called upon to give evidence before the Select Committee. I may say that I was not interviewing him in any sense of the term. I had known Mr. Rhodes some little time, and he was aware of the deep interest I took in South African matters.

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then we shall make a bigger meal upon them than we did before.' 'What did you do?' I said to my fellow-guest. 'Oh, I made him get down, and hammered him, and made him walk the rest of the way, which is the worst punishment you can inflict upon a Boer.' He further told me that at railway-stations unprotected Englishwomen constantly had the word 'Amajuba' shouted in their ears by young Boers, and that the relations generally were so strained that something must crack before long. This conversation, it must be borne in mind, took place six months before the Raid.

[1] 'Select Committee,' p. xxxix.

Abruptly, as was his wont, Mr. Rhodes turned to me (we were alone), and said, speaking of himself in the third person, as he often does: 'Do you think Rhodes is a reckless man?' I replied, as I thought, that he was not, but that he was capable of taking very prompt action as soon as his mind was made up. 'Well,' he said, 'if Rhodes is not a reckless man, why had he anything to do with the Raid?' I replied that it was just what I should like to know. 'Well,' he said, 'there were three reasons. In the first place, after my last negotiations with old Kruger, I came to the conclusion that he was hopeless, and that nothing could be done to remedy the condition of the Uitlanders so long as he was master of the situation. That was the first reason. The second was twofold. One aspect of it was the danger of Germany establishing herself as the protecting power of the Transvaal. If that came about, good-bye to English supremacy in South Africa and anything like a system of federation.' The second aspect of the question was that Mr. Rhodes was convinced that there was a minority of the English-speaking population of South Africa which was hostile to the Imperial connection, and that that minority was constantly growing. The time, therefore, in his opinion had come to effect a revolution in the Transvaal before that minority had grown into a majority. The third reason was, as Mr. Rhodes said, that revolutions could not be effected without money, and at that moment he had at his back a combination of capitalists ready to find the sinews of war such as he might never be able to combine again.

Whether these reasons were sufficient or not, they show that Mr. Rhodes' intervention was not dictated by any personal or sordid motives, and it is an indisputable fact that Mr. Rhodes' loyalty to the flag was the main cause of the dissensions amongst the Reformers of Johannesburg which prevented any open assistance being given to Dr. Jameson. The substance of his conversation with me on that occasion was given in his examination before the Select Committee.

With all these facts before me, I find it impossible to censure Mr. Rhodes' participation in the circumstances which led to the Raid on moral grounds. If he believed

that which he stated to me in confidence was his belief, and which he suggested rather than stated to the Select Committee, that British supremacy in South Africa was menaced both from within and from without, from the alienation of the British-speaking people on the one hand, and the manifest efforts of Germany[1] to secure a foothold in the Transvaal on the other; and if he believed, as from his experience he was entitled to believe, that little assistance could be expected from the Imperial Government until such intervention was too late; and, furthermore, if he had exhausted all the means in his power to avert this castastrophe by the aid of his Dutch supporters—then, for my part, I fail to see what moral blame attaches to him for coming to the assistance of his fellow-countrymen in their struggle for liberty. As I have already said, it is the sheerest nonsense to impute criminality to him for having deceived, if he did deceive, the High Commissioner. Having made up his mind to support the movement in Johannesburg, there were only two alternatives open to him. One was to take the High Commissioner into his confidence, which would have either ruined his plans or have ruined the High Commissioner, or to keep his designs a secret from the Imperial representative, an alternative which of course involved deception. From the political point of view, Mr. Rhodes himself frankly admitted that he had been guilty of a great blunder. Nothing could justify the hazardous enterprise to which he lent countenance and monetary assistance but an unqualified success, and it is difficult to see how Mr. Rhodes could at any time have failed to recognise that the odds against success were practically overwhelming. It is more likely than not that he, like hundreds of others, believed in Dr. Jameson's star. The fate of these star-credulants has been far from encouraging. Napoleon I. believed in his star, and he died in exile in St. Helena. Lord Revelstoke had similar confidence in his star, and he witnessed the humiliation of the great house of Baring Brothers. Reviewing the prospects of the Johannesburg conspiracy, even had it been carried out on the lines originally intended, it is difficult to discover in it any elements of success. To blunder to the extent

[1] See note at the end of the chapter.

Mr. Rhodes blundered is, in that metaphorical language which we so often use literally, to be guilty of a crime; but I maintain, as I have done from the very outset, that the blunder left no stain upon Mr. Rhodes' character as a man of honour. Garibaldi made not one, but half a dozen such blunders, and yet no man did more for the unification of Italy, and no man was more honoured in this country. It was after his defeat and surrender on the plains of Aspramonte that he visited England, was welcomed by men of distinction of all parties in the State, and was entertained at a public banquet by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London. And yet the offences against international law, the acts of rebellion against recognised authority, the perpetration of embarrassing blunder after embarrassing blunder, by Garibaldi were infinitely more grave than the single act of indiscretion of which Mr. Rhodes was guilty. His Dutch supporters in Cape Colony had cause for complaint; but they could not deny that up to the date of the Raid he had loyally fulfilled his part of the compact which he had made with Mr. Hofmeyr as representing the Afrikander Bond. Englishmen had no grievance against him save one, and that was that the failure of his designs placed them in a false position, and for the time made Great Britain the laughing-stock of the civilized world. But the whole responsibility for this lamentable episode does not rest with him. In the next chapter I propose to give my reasons for thinking that the only serious error of judgment which can be imputed to Mr. Chamberlain was made at this crisis, and was largely responsible for the ridiculous position in which England for once found herself.

NOTE.—This apprehension was based upon the famous birthday speech of President Kruger at the German Club on January 26, 1895. A koomers (commerce) had been given at the Transvaal Hotel in honour of the Kaiser's birthday. The speech reported, in the *Johannesburg Star*, will be found at length in the appendix to the Report of the Select Committee on British South Africa, p. 548. In the course of his speech, Mr. Kruger said: 'The British Government received me in a friendly manner and had that matter of the suzerainty altered. Previously I could not enter into treaties with other countries without Her Majesty's consent; but they met me in a friendly spirit, and the treaty was altered. They relinquished the suzerainty, and I was free. . . . After that I went through Europe, and amongst other places I visited Germany, where I was received by the Kaiser. I always thought before that that our Republic was regarded as a child among other countries, but the Kaiser received me as the representative of a grown-up Republic. I was courteously treated, and was able to enter into a treaty with Germany, our

Republic being recognised as an important country. . . . I know I may count on the Germans in future, and I hope Transvaalers will do their best to strengthen and foster the friendship that exists between them. . . . When the Convention with Her Majesty's Government was signed, I regarded this Republic as a little child, and a little child has to wear small clothing. When a child's clothes are made, they must not be made to fit a man. But as the child grows up, it requires bigger clothes—the old ones will burst; and that is our position to-day. We are growing up, and, although we are young, we are feeling that, if one nation tries to annex us, the other will try to stop it. When we asked Her Majesty's Government for bigger clothes, they said, "Eh, eh! what's this?" and could not see that we were growing up. As regards this celebration. I am very pleased to see you Germans here to do honour to your Kaiser. You have proved law-abiding citizens here, and I feel certain when the time comes for the Republic to wear still larger clothes you will have done much to bring it about. It is my wish to continue these peaceful relations, and I wish also to give Germany all the support a little child can give to a grown-up man. The time is coming for our friendship to be more firmly established for ever.' That there was something more than mere bounce in this speech of Mr. Kruger's is clear from the German despatch to Count Hatzfeld, reporting an interview which the Chancellor had had with the English Ambassador on February 1, 1895. 'Sir Edward Malet communicated to me a private despatch from Lord Kimberley, which contained some remarks concerning the attitude of Germany towards the South African Republic relative to President Kruger's words when proposing the Emperor's health on the 27th ultimo. I remarked to the Ambassador that, if Lord Kimberley believed that a spirit unsuited to the international position of the Transvaal was being encouraged in that country by the attitude of Germany, the obligation to give facts on which to found his permission lay with him. I asked whether it was possible that Lord Kimberley regarded President Kruger's sentiments as regards His Majesty the Emperor as an expression of that spirit and as compromising British interests. I said that our policy had the simple object of protecting against any attack those material interests which Germany had acquired through the construction of railways and the opening up of commercial relations with the Transvaal. These interests demanded the maintaining of the Transvaal as an independent State, as laid down in the treaty (*sic*) of 1884, and the guarantee of the *status quo* as regards the railways and the harbour of Delagoa Bay. I said that this indicated the beginning and end of our policy in these parts. . . . If the English colonial party were sensitive on the question of the Transvaal, ours was equally so. If Lord Kimberley desired the maintenance of the *status quo*, our views were in every way identical, and I regarded it as by no means an impossibility that we should place this agreement on paper. I emphasized especially that the policy which Mr. Rhodes had announced of the gradual absorption of the Transvaal by Cape Colony, and of the foundation of a commercial federation in order to hasten this process, could scarcely be described as a policy of the maintenance of the *status quo*.' The impression created by these despatches was, of course, much strengthened by the famous telegram sent by the Kaiser to Mr. Kruger on the defeat of Dr. Jameson and his troops. It is only fair, however, to add the less-known telegram of January 6, 1896, from Baron Marschall von Bebington to Count Hatzfeld, German Ambassador in London, which ran as follows: 'To-day, in discussing with Sir F. Lascelles the impression made on English public opinion by His Majesty's telegram to President Kruger, I remarked to him in the course of conversation that I must take exception to the construction put on it by the English press, to the effect that this telegram constituted an unfriendly act towards England and an infraction of English rights. Germans were very sensitive of questions of right, and it was neither their practice nor their wish to encroach on the rights of others, but in return they required that their rights should be respected. No hostility towards England could possibly be found in the fact that the German Emperor congratulated the head of a friendly State on a victory over armed bands who had invaded his territory in defiance of international law, and whose cause had been declared illegal by the English Government themselves.'

CHAPTER VIII

THE COMING OF LORD MILNER

I HAVE said in the last chapter that in my judgment Mr. Chamberlain was guilty of a serious error in judgment in dealing with the situation as it stood after the Raid. I hasten, however, to proclaim my belief, not only that the error was a very natural one, but was also one which would have been perpetrated by ninety-nine statesmen out of every hundred who should have found themselves in Mr. Chamberlain's position. In the first place, it must be remembered that Mr. Chamberlain had only been in office a very few months when the Raid occurred. There is no department of State in which there are so many tangled threads to pick up as are at all times to be found in the Colonial Office. It is comparatively easy for an incoming Foreign Minister to obtain from his predecessor most of the valuable clues to the problems engaging the attention of the Foreign Office. They are not, as a rule, many in number, and with the general drift of most of them the incoming Minister is nearly as familiar as the man whom he succeeds. In the Colonial Office, on the other hand, there is at all times an almost inexhaustible number of questions of which the outside public know very little, and of which, to tell the brutal truth, the Colonial Office knows very little more. From Lord Ripon, whom Mr. Chamberlain succeeded, it was hopeless to expect much enlightenment. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* It is no blame, therefore, to Mr. Chamberlain that he should have been ignorant of all those essential facts which it has been the object of this history to set forth. He did not know that the Raid was but the culmination of a long

series of misfortunes and scandals. Above all, he knew nothing whatever of the character of the Dutch. Had he been in the possession of all the knowledge which he now has at his finger-ends, he would have acted very differently from what he did. His own statement of the situation is undoubtedly the true one.

> 'I was alone in London; I had no communication with my colleagues. I had to act at a moment's notice, and I did act, in spite of all the temptations to refrain, in spite of the doubts in my own mind, because I felt that the act of Dr. Jameson was wrong, and therefore I felt as a Minister of the Crown that I was bound to repudiate it.'

That was a right and honourable feeling, and no words of admiration are too strong for the promptitude and single-mindedness with which Mr. Chamberlain set to work to check the mischief which was indeed irreparable. Had he stopped at the repudiation of Dr. Jameson and the failure of his determined efforts to prevent him prosecuting his mad Raid, all would have been well. When he had proved, not only to President Kruger, but to the whole world, that the Raid was the irresponsible act of conspirators, at that time unknown, and that he had done all in his power, all that was in the power of any Minister, however strong, to arrest this inroad as soon as he knew it had taken place, his business, as we see it now, was to have sat still and let events take their course. The moment that Dr. Jameson and his followers were within the jurisdiction of the Transvaal Government Mr. Chamberlain's authority over them and responsibility for their actions ceased. Clearly, he should have left it to Mr. Kruger to deal with the situation as seemed best to him. He might have warned him as a friend that the consequences of resorting to extreme measures with regard to his prisoners would be so to excite public indignation in England that it would be impossible for any Minister to resist the pressure certain to be brought to bear to compel the South African Republic to fulfil in spirit and in letter its obligations under the Conventions. Unfortunately, Mr. Chamberlain listened to the dictates of generosity and compassion rather than to those of cold reason. He knew the character of Dr. Jameson

and his associates well enough to be assured that they were actuated by no mean or sordid motives. He thought, though in all probability erroneously, that their lives were in danger. He therefore pleaded with Mr. Kruger for their safety. By so doing he relieved the perplexed old man of Pretoria of a responsibility of which General Joubert said in his own case that it prevented him sleeping at nights. The President, with the prisoners upon his hands, and with Johannesburg still seething with the spirit of revolution, was in truth between the devil and the deep sea. On the one hand there was the hatred and the invincible ignorance of his more fanatical supporters appealing to him to avenge at Krugersdorp what they were pleased to call the massacre of Slachter's Nek; on the other hand, he knew enough of England and of Englishmen to be aware that the execution of Dr. Jameson and Sir John Willoughby would provoke a passionate storm of indignation, which in the end would drive him out of the Transvaal.

Nearly every possible crime that can be imputed to a statesman has been laid to the charge of Mr. Chamberlain. He has been accused, amongst other things, of heartlessness and unscrupulousness. It is a hard saying, but it is true, that had the Colonial Secretary been cursed with either of these defects at the time of the Raid he would have been saved much trouble afterwards. On the receipt of the news of Dr. Jameson's surrender, which was communicated in a message from Sir Jacobus de Wet, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson:

> I regret that Jameson's disobedience has led to this deplorable loss of life. Do your best to secure generous treatment to the prisoners and care of the wounded. . . . This lamentable occurrence renders your presence in the South African Republic more desirable than ever.[1]

And the next morning Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed direct to Mr. Kruger:

> It is rumoured here that you have ordered prisoners to be shot. I do not believe it, and rely on your generosity in the hour of victory.

On January 4 Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson:

> President Kruger's magnanimity if he were to offer to hand over the

[1] January 2, 8 p.m.

prisoners would be very highly appreciated by me. In such a case I should propose that all should be sent out of the country as you propose, except the ringleaders. If the ringleaders were delivered up, they would be indicted and brought to trial in this country; but it is right to point out that a situation might then arise which would be attended with great difficulties. It would be necessary to consider the precise legal offence which has been committed, and whatever might be the form of indictment, the trial would evoke expressions of public feeling both one way and the other, which would be prolonged, and could hardly fail to have a bad effect. Furthermore, the result of the trial could not be certainly anticipated, and might not satisfy the interests of justice. These considerations ought, in my opinion, to be in fairness submitted to the President. On the other hand, if he were to offer to deliver up the prisoners, I could not decline the offer, unless I could be assured by you that in the event of trial taking place in the South African Republic no excessive punishment would be awarded for the offence which has undoubtedly been committed. It might be pointed out by you that the President would furnish a marked instance of generosity if he were to release all the other prisoners; while, by dealing mercifully with the ringleaders, he would alienate from them the sympathy which if they were harshly treated would undoubtedly be attracted.

Now, it is quite clear from these telegrams that there were two considerations weighing, I will not say unduly, in Mr. Chamberlain's mind. The first was his consciousness of the wrong done to the South African Republic by the Raid, and the second was his desire to save Dr. Jameson and those who accompanied him from the consequences of their desperate folly. But I think there will be very little doubt as to the verdict of history. Her Majesty's Government had nothing in the world to do with the incursion into the territory of the South African Republic. Such raids in badly-defined territories, especially in Africa, West as well as South, have not been by any means uncommon. Mr. Chamberlain and the High Commissioner had done all that it was in the power of men to do to recall Dr. Jameson when they heard that he had crossed the frontier. There, so far as the Imperial Government and this particular phase of the South African Problem were concerned, the matter should have ended. Dr. Jameson and his colleagues had *proprio motu* invaded the territory of the South African Republic. The South African Republic had met them in the field, had killed and wounded many of them, and had accepted the surrender of the others under the express condition that their lives should be spared.[1] The right of dealing with

[1] It is unnecessary to go into the question of the bad faith displayed by Cronje on this occasion. The facts are beyond doubt.

these prisoners was exclusively Mr. Kruger's, as was the responsibility for the punishment meted out to them. If they had been shot an international question would have arisen in consequence of the conditions of their surrender. If, however, they had been sentenced to life terms of imprisonment, so far as their sentence was in accordance with the Roman-Dutch law, neither the prisoners nor anyone else on their behalf would have been entitled to complain. They must have known, one and all, that they took their lives and liberties into their own hands, exactly as do the volunteers for a forlorn hope, when they quitted British soil. If Mr. Chamberlain had thought fit, he might have warned President Kruger in a friendly spirit of the inevitable effects upon English public opinion of harsh treatment of his captives. Under no circumstances, however, should he have put Great Britain under any sort of obligation to the Government of the South African Republic, and still less to Dutch representatives in the Cape. It was singularly unfortunate that Sir Hercules Robinson, whom I do not wish to criticise beyond saying that his nerve had absolutely failed him, should have allowed Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr, the 'boss' of the Afrikander Bond, to dictate to him what should be done. That he did so is obvious from a telegram from Sir Hercules to Mr. Chamberlain on January 1. It ran as follows:[1]

December 31.

Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr has just been to see me. He is indignant at Jameson's invasion of South African Republic with armed force, and says this will be the feeling of every Afrikander in South Africa. He says Jameson will disregard the messages he has received from me, and the public will not know of them. And he urges me to issue proclamation publicly repudiating Jameson's action on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, and calling on all British subjects to abstain from aiding and abetting him in his armed violation of territory of friendly State. He thinks this step only chance of averting civil war. Acting on your injunction to leave no stone unturned to prevent mischief, I have decided to issue proclamation, and hope you will approve.

Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed directly to Mr. Chamberlain what in the circumstances can only be described as an impertinent message. In it he says:

Your emphatic repudiation on behalf of Her Majesty's Government of

[1] C. 7933, p. 8. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Jameson's action will be appreciated by all right-minded colonists, and tend towards restoring the feeling of mutual confidence and of security now completely shattered by that carefully-matured conspiracy against a friendly State which culminated in the bloodshed near Krugersdorp, and in which some men of high reputation in British financial and military circles, as well as in Her Majesty's service, took an active part where others held to have winked at it and to have purposely refrained from taking prompt steps to crush the evil thing at its birth.[1] I therefore beg that Her Majesty's Government will take in their serious consideration the question whether the time has not come for a regular change in the government of the territories under the rule of the British South Africa Company, now that such rule has proved to be a source of danger to the public peace of South Africa. I trust that a searching inquiry will forthwith be instituted by them, through impartial and energetic men specially deputed for the purpose to South Africa, into the conception and development of the conspiracy, as well as into the circumstances which made it possible for Dr. Jameson to reach nearly the end of his march before a proclamation by Her Majesty's High Commissioner was made public in the Transvaal, repudiating the expedition and warning British subjects against countenancing it.[2] So long as the present administrative system and personnel of Rhodesia remain unchanged, reports such as that of the open recruiting of men at Buluwayo and of a contemplated march of the Rhodesia Horse on the Transvaal will obtain wide and disturbing credence.

While thanking you for the information that Her Majesty's Government are doing all in their power to counteract the mischief which has been done, I beg to assure you that no efforts shall be wanting on my part to give my co-operation, whatever it may be worth, to the same end; where, firmly opposing every filibustering attempt to embroil the various States and colonies of South Africa, I shall at the same time apply my influence whenever I can fitly do so, to obtain redress of legitimate grievances and leniency of treatment for the misguided men who have become the victims of heartless and ambitious financial and other schemers.

I remain, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

H. J. HOFMEYR.

P.S.—I regret that through the High Commissioner's departure for Pretoria I cannot, without loss of time, forward this communication through him. I am, however, sending him a copy.

Mr. Hofmeyr was not at that time in Parliament. He had appeared for the moment in the open,[3] but very soon

[1] As Mr. Hofmeyr was already aware of Mr. Rhodes' participation in the conspiracy, the words in the above telegram from 'others held,' were universally understood in South Africa to apply to the High Commissioner.

[2] This innuendo is directly levelled at Sir Hercules Robinson.

[3] Mr. Schreiner in his evidence before the Select Committee (Minutes, p. 177) defends Mr. Hofmeyr in the following curious passage: 'The Honourable Mr. Hofmeyr has been a Minister of the Crown in the colony, is now a member of the Executive there, which corresponds with us to the dignity of a Privy Councillor in England, and has been during the six years of Mr. Rhodes' tenure of office as Prime Minister his constant confidant on every matter of public importance; so much so that one would never conceive that a matter of any large policy was in any way entered upon without Mr. Rhodes having taken counsel with

returned to that underground work which earned for him from Mr. Merriman the designation of 'the mole.' What importance and influence he enjoyed was due to the fact that he was the absolute controller of the Afrikander Bond. Now, as I have pointed out in a previous chapter, raiding was not a novelty in South Africa. Mr. Kruger's burghers had raided a good deal and in a great many directions; but, so far from addressing remonstrances to Pretoria whenever such illegal incursions took place, the Afrikander Bond, as we have seen, memorialized the British Government to consult the feelings of the Transvaalers, and not to employ armed force to secure respect for the Conventions. Mr. Chamberlain's conduct, therefore, well intentioned as it was, put the Imperial Government under an obligation to the President of the South African Republic and to the leader of the Afrikander Bond. Amongst the good qualities of the Dutch, gratitude and generosity are not to be found. Mr. Chamberlain at that time, of course, though he was to learn much about it later, could have no knowledge of that circumstance. As a matter of fact, out of sheer simple good-heartedness he placed a card in the hand of the enemies of England, which, to do them justice, they played with infinite skill. Mr. Kruger was relieved of the inexpressible embarrassment of having to deal with the raiders in his power, and also with the still formidable combination existing in Johannesburg. The situation there may be clearly gathered from the telegram sent by Sir Hercules Robinson to Mr. Chamberlain on the morrow of his arrival at Pretoria. It is dated January 5.[1]

I arrived here last night. Position of affairs very critical on side of Government South African Republic and of Orange Free State. There is desire to show moderation, but Boers show tendency to get out of hand and to demand execution of Jameson. I am told that Government of

Mr. Hofmeyr, because Mr. Hofmeyr is practically the leader of something very like half the popular House, although he is not now in the House. I think it right I should state that in order to protect Mr. Hofmeyr against the insinuation that he was doing something unusual or unpatriotic or out of the common when, Mr. Rhodes having declined to take a step to stop Dr. Jameson, Mr. Hofmeyr stepped in and begged that the High Commissioner should vindicate the dignity of the Empire and protect Colonial interests in South Africa. . . . I say it saved the situation. I say there would have been war in South Africa if it had not been for this action, because Johannesburg, with whose grievances to the extent to which they exist the Colony also sympathized, was quieted by that proclamation.'

[1] C. 7933, p. 30.

South African Republic will demand disarmament of Johannesburg as a condition precedent to negotiations. Their military preparations are now practically complete, and Johannesburg, if besieged, could not hold out, as they are short of water and coal. On side of Johannesburg leaders desire to be moderate, but men make safety of Jameson, and concession of items in manifesto issued conditions precedent to disarmament. If these are refused, they assert they will elect their own leaders and fight it out in their own way. As the matter now stands, I see great difficulty in avoiding civil war, but I will do my best, and telegraph result of my official interview to-morrow.

Mr. Kruger exhibited on this occasion a finesse which did him credit. He played off the life of Dr. Jameson and his colleagues, which by the terms of the surrender were not at his disposal, against the Reform leaders at Johannesburg, and he used the pressure of the Imperial Government as a means of keeping the extreme Doppers in hand. As soon as the most urgent danger was removed, Mr. Kruger abandoned that attitude of conciliation which he at first adopted. He had invited the leaders of the Reform Committee to confer with him at Pretoria, and promised in a proclamation issued on December 31—the day on which Jameson started—that

the Government is still prepared to take into consideration all grievances that may be laid before it in a proper manner, and to submit the same to the people of the land without delay for treatment.

At the same time he duped the delegates of the Reform Committee into supplying him with a list of the ringleaders, which they did in unsuspecting good faith, and on which the subsequent prosecutions were based. The moment he was safe, Mr. Kruger, who, as we have seen, promised on the last day of the old year immediate consideration of the grievances, announced through Sir Hercules Robinson on the 6th that

the decision of the Government was that Johannesburg must lay down arms unconditionally as a precedent to any discussion and consideration of grievances.

This decision, it will be observed, was communicated three days after the German Emperor had sent the historic telegram to President Kruger.[1] On the 7th Sir Hercules

[1] 'I express to you my sincere congratulations that without appealing to the help of friendly Powers you and your people have succeeded in repelling with your own forces the armed bands which had broken into your country, and in maintaining the independence of your country against foreign oppression.' To which

Robinson telegraphed to Sir Jacobus de Wet at Johannesburg, in ignorance of the condition of Dr. Jameson's surrender:

> You should inform the Johannesburg people that I consider that if they lay down their arms they will be acting loyally and honourably, and that if they do not comply with my request they will forfeit all claim to sympathy from Her Majesty's Government and from British subjects throughout the world, as the lives of Jameson and the prisoners are now practically in their hands.

The result, of course, so far as the Reform Committee was concerned, was submission, a submission for which they have been most cruelly and most unjustly censured.[1] The Reform Committee issued the following resolution:

> The Reform Committee in Johannesburg, having seriously considered the ultimatum of the Government of the South African Republic, conveyed to them through Her Britannic Majesty's Agent at Pretoria in a telegram dated 6th instant, to the effect that Johannesburg must lay down its arms as a condition precedent to a discussion and consideration of grievances, have unanimously decided to comply with this demand, and have given instructions to the citizens employed by this Committee for maintaining good order to lay down their arms. In coming to this determination, the Committee rely upon the Government that it will maintain law and order and protect life and property in this town at this critical juncture. The Committee have been actuated by a paramount desire to do everything possible to insure the safety of Dr. Jameson and his men to advance the amicable discussion of settlement with the Government, and to support Her Majesty's High Commissioner in his efforts in this respect.

It was more easy, however, to convince the leaders of the Reform movement than it was to hold in check the excited populace of Johannesburg. I cannot do better than give the account of a very impartial eye-witness, whom I have already quoted, Captain Francis Younghusband, C.I.E., who, as I have already noted, had no sympathy with the Raid.[2]

> In the forenoon of January 7 (he says) a huge mob assembled outside

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Mr. Kruger had replied on the 5th: 'I testify to your Majesty my very deep and heartfelt thanks for your Majesty's sincere congratulations. With God's help we do hope to do everything further that is possible for the holding of our dearly-bought independence and the stability of our beloved Republic.'

[1] I am glad of this opportunity of making this public recantation, because at the time I was Assistant-Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and something more than a consenting party to the undeserved contumely heaped upon men who, I am now convinced, performed a most difficult and distasteful duty in a spirit of the most magnanimous self-denial.

[2] 'South Africa of To-day,' p. 90.

the club to be addressed by Sir Jacobus de Wet. I stood on the verandah close beside the British Agent, and as I looked down upon the sea of faces beneath, and saw the effects of the speech upon the people, I could realize the gravity of the crisis and how easily the trouble might come on. Sir Jacobus tried to explain to them in how defenceless a state the town was, and in what danger the women and children would lie if the men refused to give up their arms, and the Boers in consequence attacked the town; but such an appeal only served to irritate the mob. They thought themselves quite equal to dealing with any number of Boers; they did not care for the appearance of surrendering their arms from motives of fear. The appeal on that ground tended rather to increase than diminish their determination to retain them.

A far more successful appeal was made in the speech of Sir Sidney Shippard, who told them that from regard for themselves alone he knew that they would not think of laying down their arms, but that others than themselves had to be considered, and the fate of brave men was in their hands. If they persisted in their determination to retain their arms, then Dr. Jameson and his brother-officers would almost certainly be killed; if, on the contrary, they listened to the request of the High Commissioner, their case would be considered by him. The mob responded more readily to this appeal; they surlily consented to lay down their arms. By the following morning most of them had been collected.

The disarmament of Johannesburg was thus completed without mishap. . . . So, after lasting eight days, ended an absolutely unique revolution. Two thousand men had been in arms in what was nothing but a huge mining camp—and mining camps are not usually remarkable for good order—yet not even a policeman had been knocked on the head, and not a single act of violence had been committed. One week the Government, recognising that in the town of Johannesburg they were unable to cope with the armed forces which had suddenly sprung into existence, discreetly withdrew their men. Next week Johannesburg, finding the Government stronger than it thought, with similar discretion lays down its arms. The Government had not fired one shot at a Johannesburg man, and Johannesburg had not fired one shot against the Government.

And to this description Captain Younghusband adds the personal experience of an eye-witness who had been in touch with all classes in Johannesburg, which dispels the widespread fallacy that the Revolution and the Raid were parts of a deep-laid conspiracy to annex the Transvaal to the British Empire.

Though the crisis (he says)[1] was over, deep feelings on both sides had been excited which will not be laid for years. The Boers' distrust of the Uitlanders was increased tenfold, and the sense of failure is rankling with the Uitlanders. Both alike have a deep-rooted desire in common for the existence of the State as a Republic. The simple pastoral Boer recoils at the thought of being governed by the schemes of Uitlander speculators, and the pushing Uitlander capitalist frets at the obstacles put in the way of his enterprise by the untrained Boers. Yet both have come

[1] 'South Africa of To-day,' p. 92.

to the country to remain in it, and both want the Government of it to be republican and free from outside control.

Mr. Kruger had achieved a success all round, for which it would be difficult to find a parallel in history.

Had he analyzed his gains and losses after the manner of Robinson Crusoe, he would probably have given the first place to the great personal triumph he had won over Mr. Rhodes, whom he had chosen to regard as his lifelong enemy. He must have realized at the time that the effect of the Raid would be the temporary, if not the permanent, exclusion from public life of the man who had fenced in the Transvaal with British territory. Moreover, he doubtless flattered himself that he was rid for ever of the only possible rival for the affections and support of the Dutch population of South Africa. But his real gains were far more substantial than the gratification of his personal prejudices. At the time immediately preceding the Raid his own position in the Transvaal was far indeed from being stable. The progressive party was unquestionably gaining strength, and his defeat of General Joubert had been achieved by methods which were not only discreditable, but which did not admit of repetition. More than this, there was a growing tendency on the part of the younger generation of women—daughters of his burghers—to ally themselves with the young Uitlanders, who were flocking in increasing numbers to Johannesburg. The Doppers, who formed the backbone of his party, still increased, perhaps more rapidly than other sections of the population; but their hatred of progress, their indifference to education, and the dislike of town life and all that it implied, daily diminished their influence and their power.[1] All this was changed by the Raid. Mr. Kruger, aided unconsciously by Mr. Chamberlain, magnified and exaggerated its significance. The consequence was that all ranks closed up. The

[1] Of this dislike of town life, a friend of mine had a picturesque experience. He obtained his butter and milk and eggs from a farmhouse a few miles outside Johannesburg. Considering the prices that prevailed in Johannesburg for every kind of agricultural produce, the farmer's wife with whom he dealt sold her commodities at a very reasonable rate. The explanation was that he had to send out to the farm for everything he wanted. Driving one day past her house, he asked her why she did not bring all her produce into Johannesburg, where she could command a much higher price, to which she replied: 'If I took water to hell, I could sell it at a pound a drop.'

distinction between Progressive and Dopper disappeared. Whatever may have been the private feelings of General Joubert, he was obliged to disguise them and identify himself with the reactionary party, the consequences of whose permanent ascendancy he had long anticipated.

In the third place, Mr. Kruger had not only humiliated the Johannesburgers, whom he loathed, and had settled some scores of long standing, but he had found in the Raid an artificial excuse for steeling a heart already as hard as Pharaoh's against any appeal to remedy the grievances of those upon whose industry he fattened. The cause of reform was put back by the Raid as indefinitely as Pitt's dreams of Parliamentary reform were postponed by the Napoleonic wars.

In the fourth place, President Kruger had made open trial of the feelings and disposition of the Dutch population of Cape Colony and the Orange Free State, and the result must have surpassed even his sanguine expectations.

In the fifth place, he had obtained, or thought he had obtained, a formal and undisguised guarantee of German protection against any attempt on the part of Great Britain to limit or suppress his independence. There was much to justify him in that view besides the knowledge he had gained of the results of Dr. Leyds' secret negotiations. In spite of explanations subsequently given, it is difficult to see how the words in the Kaiser's message could have borne any other interpretation save that which Mr. Kruger put upon them. When he found himself congratulated upon his single-handed defence against 'foreign oppression,' he naturally concluded that interference on the part of Great Britain would be met by resistance from Germany.

Sixthly and lastly, he had effectually tied for some time to come the hands of the Imperial Government. Mr. Chamberlain's well-intentioned and chivalrous policy had in the eyes of the world involved Great Britain in responsibility for the consequences of the rash and reckless acts of a few men over whom the Government had no control. Was there ever an instance in history of so much being gained at so trifling an expense, and, as we now know, at so infinitesimal a risk?

I have pointed out in the foregoing pages what I believe to have been the unfortunate consequences of Mr. Chamberlain's interference after he had taken the most effectual measures to repudiate and defeat the Raid. I am very far indeed from anticipating that the historian will blame Mr. Chamberlain's conduct. If he erred at all, he erred on the side of righteousness and mercy, and whoever else is entitled to throw stones at Mr. Chamberlain for the part he played at the time of the Raid, it is certainly not those whose main charge against him is that he did not carry the policy of self-abasement and gratuitous reparation further than he did. The views which I have expressed here I held in 1896, but I am free to confess that among the stanchest supporters of an Imperial policy in South Africa I found none at that time to agree with me. And therefore it is quite possible that, if Mr. Chamberlain had viewed the situation in the same light as it presented itself to me, he would have lacked that political and moral backing necessary to adopt a policy of absolute reserve. Even at that date he clearly saw the ultimate end to be pursued, though the new difficulties created by the Raid deterred him from taking the most direct road.

Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson on January 13:[1]

Now that Her Majesty's Government have fulfilled their obligations to the South African Republic, and have engaged to bring the leaders in the recent invasion to trial, they are anxious that the negotiations which are being conducted by you should result in a permanent settlement by which the possibility of further internal troubles will be prevented. The majority of the population is composed of Uitlanders, and their complete exclusion from any share in the government of the country is an admitted grievance which is publicly recognised as such by the friends of the Republic as well as by the opinion of civilized Europe. There will always be a danger of internal disturbance so long as this grievance exists, and I desire that you will earnestly impress upon President Kruger the wisdom of making concessions in the interests alike of the South African Republic and of South Africa as a whole.

There is a possibility that the President might be induced to rely on the support of some foreign Power in resisting the grant of reforms or in making demands upon Her Majesty's Government; and in view of this I think it well to inform you that Great Britain will resist at all costs the interference of any foreign Power in the affairs of the South African Republic. The suggestion that such interference was contemplated by

[1] Blue-book C. 7933, pp. 50, 51.

Germany was met in this country by an unprecedented and unanimous outburst of public feeling.

In order to be prepared for all eventualities, it has been thought desirable by Her Majesty's Government to commission a flying squadron of powerful men-of-war with twelve torpedo-ships, and many other vessels are held in reserve.

Her Majesty's Government have no reason at the present moment to anticipate any conflict of interest with foreign Powers, but I think it right for you to know that Great Britain will not tolerate any change in her relations with the Republic, and that, while loyally respecting its internal independence, subject to the Conventions,[1] she will maintain her position as the paramount Power in South Africa, and especially the provisions of Article IV. of the Convention of 1884.

It is my sincere hope that President Kruger, who has hitherto shown so much wisdom in dealing with the situation, will now take the opportunity afforded to him of making, of his own free will, such reasonable concessions to the Uitlanders as will remove the last excuse for disloyalty, and will establish the free institutions of the Republic on a firm and lasting basis.

You will recollect the promises that have before been made to the Uitlanders, which unfortunately have not been fulfilled. I trust the President will now see his way to repeat these promises to you as the representative of the Paramount Power; and in this case he may rely upon the sincere friendship of Her Majesty's Government, and on their determination that all external action against the independence of the Republic shall be prevented.

There is not much reason to believe that in any circumstances President Kruger would have lent a willing ear to such advice. As a matter of fact, it was not tendered to him. I have many reasons for not wishing to discuss minutely the attitude adopted by Sir Hercules Robinson at this crisis. By universal admission, his health and nerves, not at any time in a very satisfactory condition, had been hopelessly shattered by the excitement caused by the Raid. He knew that he was suspected by the Afrikander Bond of being a party to the Raid. He had allowed Mr. Hofmeyr, as we have seen, to dictate to him the policy to be pursued. He had been hurried up to Pretoria with instructions which were necessarily incomplete. I think it is not unfair to say that his judgment was utterly paralyzed by the difficulties in which he found himself. I know that on the occasion of his first visit to the President at Pretoria he made one of his A.D.C.'s exchange his uniform for mufti, lest the sight of a

[1] At a later date (1899) Mr. Chamberlain was charged with having dragged in the Convention of 1881 as an afterthought to justify his claim on behalf of the Throne to suzerainty, but it will be observed that he uses the plural ('Conventions') in all his despatches, as did the Select Committee of the House of Commons, as I have already pointed out, in their report.

red coat should infuriate Mr. Kruger. At any rate, he was all for procrastination and delay. On January 15, in replying to the telegram from Mr. Chamberlain which I have given, he cabled that he thought the moment chosen for pressing President Kruger for reform was 'inopportune.'

Mr. Chamberlain replied on the same day that Sir Hercules must 'communicate with the President at once.'

On the 16th Sir Hercules telegraphed:

> No promise was made to Johannesburg as an inducement to disarm, except that the promises made in the President's previous proclamation would be adhered to, and that Jameson and the other prisoners would not be transferred until Johannesburg had unconditionally laid down its arms and surrendered. I sent your long telegram of 4th of January to President Kruger, but the question of concessions to Uitlanders has never been discussed between us. Pending result of coming trials, and the extent to which Johannesburg is implicated in the alleged conspiracy to subvert the State is made clear, the question of political privileges would not be entertained by Government of South African Republic.

And later in the same day Sir Hercules telegraphed:

> If you will leave matter in my hands, I will resume advocacy of Uitlanders' claims at the first moment that I think it can be done with advantage. The present moment is most inopportune, as the strong feeling of irritation against the Outlanders exists both among the burghers and members of Volksraad of both Republics. Any attempt to dictate in regard to the internal affairs of South African Republic at this moment *would be resisted by all parties in South Africa*,[1] and would do great harm.

It is useless to discuss the motives which actuated Sir Hercules Robinson in what was practically a defiance of the instructions he received from Mr. Chamberlain.

There is one passage in a long review of the situation which Mr. Chamberlain forwarded to Sir Hercules Robinson on which it has always seemed to me that the case of the Imperial Government should have been based from first to last.

> As regards the internal affairs of the Republic (said Mr. Chamberlain), I may observe that, independently of any rights of intervention in particular matters which may arise out of the articles of the Convention of 1884, Great Britain is justified, in the interests of South Africa as a whole, as well as of the peace and stability of the South African Republic, in tendering its friendly counsels as regards the new-comers, who are mainly British subjects.

[1] Italics are mine.

I leave now for a moment the relations between Her Majesty's Government and the President of the South African Republic to call attention to the effect of the Raid upon the behaviour of the Dutch inhabitants of Cape Colony. I use the word 'behaviour' because I do not believe that anyone at all cognizant with South African questions will seriously maintain that the Raid caused any serious difference in the mental attitude in the two races towards one another. In the previous chapter I have shown by cumulative evidence that, long before the existence of Johannesburg, the Dutch of Cape Colony looked towards Pretoria as the orthodox Roman Catholic has ever looked towards Rome. The moment that any question arose affecting the relations between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic, the whole weight of Dutch public opinion was thrown into the scale against Great Britain regardless of the merits of the particular issue. It is idle to pretend that the members of the Afrikander Bond who complained that the cold-blooded murder of Englishmen by Transvaal raiders had not been condoned would be lashed into moral fury by a Raid which the action of the Imperial Government had promptly rendered abortive. It is true that the anodyne of Mr. Rhodes' alliance with Mr. Hofmeyr had lulled to sleep for a time the aspirations of the Dutch for a united South African Republic. But these aspirations and the dreams of racial ascendancy slept but very lightly. And even this easily-broken slumber might not have been attained had not a very large proportion of the Dutch colonists believed that Mr. Rhodes was so far of one mind with themselves that he would prefer an independent Republic of South Africa to a confederated Dominion constantly interfered with from Downing Street.

I have striven at some length to demonstrate that this idea of Mr. Rhodes' policy and attitude was altogether erroneous; but I have not the slightest doubt that it was carefully fostered by Mr. Hofmeyr and his friends as a justification of their political alliance with an Englishman. The revelation of Mr. Rhodes' connection with the Raid rudely dispelled their dream, and no doubt the feeling that they had been duped was responsible for all the indignation that

was sincere. As a matter of fact, the Raid only melted the thin layer of snow which acted as a concealment, but not as a protection, against the crevasses with which the glacier was riven from end to end. The policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government tempted the Afrikanders to throw off the mask. It is a curious fact that in October of 1881, within six months of the retrocession of the Transvaal, Mr. Gladstone himself had, as in a glass darkly, foreseen some of the consequences of his mistaken magnanimity. In acknowledging and accepting the freedom of the city of London on October 22, 1881, Mr. Gladstone said, referring to South Africa:

> I know not whether it has been owing to the very comprehensive assertions that were made of our weakness, whether those assertions, largely believed in South Africa, may have induced some persons to think that they had nothing to do but to make any demand, however extravagant, if only it were sufficiently loud, to have it forthwith accepted: that may be so—I do not know; but what we do know is that, while we were exposing ourselves to much criticism that was at least plausible, we took the course of offering to the Boers at once without question, without grudge, without huckstering about small details, everything which we thought duty demanded and dignity permitted.[1]

History indeed repeated itself. Mr. Gladstone had anticipated the gratitude of the Dutch colonists who sympathized with the Transvaal, and in return he received the grossest contempt. Mr. Chamberlain doubtless thought that the prompt action taken by the Imperial Government would appeal to the loyalty and goodwill of the Afrikanders. One quotation will suffice to demonstrate how baseless this anticipation was. The quotation is taken from an unimpeachable

[1] 'The Roll of Honour,' p. 89. It may not be uninteresting to republish the sequel to this passage: the Convention with the Boers had been signed on March 22, 1881, and the Triumvirate had pledged itself in the following words:

'We promise and undertake that this Convention shall be ratified by the newly elected Volksraad within three months from this date.'

When Mr. Gladstone spoke at the Guildhall, seven months had elapsed from that date, and ratification was still delayed; and in alluding to this promise the Prime Minister said:

'We look upon these words as solemn words, and we intend to abide by them. The important reservation introduced into the Conventions . . . were introduced, not to please our fancy, or to save our character, but first to secure the peace and tranquillity of South Africa in relation to foreign affairs against any intrigues from whatever quarter; and, above all, they were introduced from regard to considerations which we deemed to be sacred, namely, the rights of the hundreds of thousands of natives who, not less than the Dutch Boers, are inhabitants of the Transvaal.'

authority. It is to be found in Mr. Reitz's 'Appeal to the Afrikanders' on the eve of war.[1]

It was to be expected that such a treacherous attack on the Republics, emanating from their own leader, would awaken the Afrikanders even in the remotest districts, and would bring fresh energy into the arena of politics. To give an instance of the measure of the feeling which had been quickened by the Raid, a short extract is given below from an article published in the organ of the Afrikander party, *Ons Land*,[2] a few months after the Raid, an article which undoubtedly expressed the feeling of Afrikanders:

'Has not Providence overruled and guided the painful course of events n South Africa since the beginning of this year (1896)? Who can doubt it? The stab which was intended to paralyze Afrikanderdom once and for all in the Republics has sent an electric thrill direct to the national heart. Afrikanderdom has awakened to a sense of earnestness and consciousness which we have not observed since the heroic war for liberty in 1881. From the Limpopo as far as Cape Town the second Majuba has given birth to a new inspiration and a new movement amongst our people in South Africa. A new feeling has rushed in huge billows over South Africa. The flaccid and cowardly Imperialism, that had already begun to dilute and weaken our national blood, gradually turned aside before the new current which permeated our people. Many who, tired of the slow development of the National idea, had resigned themselves to Imperialism, now paused and asked themselves what Imperialism had produced in South Africa? Bitterness and race hatred it is true! Since the days of Sir Harry Smith and Theophilus Shepstone and Bartle Frere to the days of Leander Jameson and Cecil Rhodes, Imperialism in South Africa has gone hand-in-hand with bloodshed and fraud. However wholesome the effects of Imperialism may be elsewhere, its continual tendency in this country during all these years has been nothing else but an attempt to force our national life and national character into foreign grooves, and to seal this pressure with blood and tears. . . . This is truly a critical moment in the existence of Afrikanderdom all over South Africa. Now or never! Now or never the foundation of a wide-embracing Nationalism must be laid. The iron is red hot, and the time for forging is at hand . . . the partition wall has disappeared. Let us stand manfully by one another. The danger has not yet disappeared; on the contrary, never has the necessity for a policy of a colonial and republican union been greater. Now the psychological moment has arrived; now our people have awakened all over South Africa. A new glow illuminates our hearts. Let us now lay the foundation-stone of a real united South Africa on the soil of a pure and *all-comprehensive national sentiment*.'

Such language caused the Jingoes to shudder, not because it was disloyal, because that it certainly was *not*, but because it proved that the Jameson Raid had suddenly awakened the Afrikanders, and that owing to this defeat of the Jingoes a vista of further and greater defeats widened out in the future.

From that time onwards to the issue of the ultimatum, the Afrikander Bond and its supporters did not attempt to

[1] 'A Century of Wrong,' pp. 49-51. The omissions and italics are those of Mr. Reitz.

[2] It must be borne in mind that *Ons Land* was the organ of Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr.

disguise their aspirations. We had, it is true, that little outburst of enthusiasm over the Queen's Jubilee in 1897 which was, as I have pointed out before, probably quite genuine, though it misled many excellent people in England. It was also quite consistent with the aspirations for a united and practically independent South Africa. Whatever might have been the opinion of statesmen in the Transvaal, there was no doubt in the mind of the more intelligent Afrikanders in Cape Colony that without the protection of Great Britain South Africa would fall an easy prey to Germany or to some other Power. The same intelligent appreciation of the situation accounts for the vote for the navy of which so much has been made. As a matter of fact, the £30,000 a year voted was in lieu of the present of a warship, which would have cost about a million, which had been promised by Sir Gordon Sprigg. The £30,000 a year could be withheld at any time, and in any case the contribution to the cost of policing the coast of South Africa was a very moderate one.[1]

The results of the Raid and the attitude assumed towards it by the Imperial Government were naturally more strongly marked in the South African Republic. Mr. Schreiner admitted in his evidence before the Select Committee that the proclamation issued by the High Commissioner, and the prompt steps taken by Mr. Chamberlain, had done more than anything else to prevent the outbreak of civil war. Mr. Chamberlain had shown, not only by his words, but by his acts, that the independence of the South African Republic would never be menaced from without, so long as England remained the paramount Power in South Africa. Mr. Kruger's action gave the lie direct to Mr. Chamberlain's assurances; because a few hundred men had made a dash across the frontier, to be disavowed by the Imperial Government and to be punished by the laws of Great Britain, Mr. Kruger continued on a much larger scale the armaments of the Transvaal which had been begun before the Raid. It was obvious to everybody that an enclave situated as was the South African Republic could not be menaced with invasion by any other Power than that of Great Britain,

[1] *Cf.* 'The South African Conspiracy,' Appendix S, p. 228.

and yet the store of guns and ammunition accumulated were sufficient to maintain, as we have seen, a campaign against an army of over a quarter of a million.[1]

It is not too much to say that on an average during the years immediately preceding and those immediately following the Raid the South African Republic, which had no seaports to defend, no commerce to protect, and no neighbours to fear except the British, spent more than half their revenue, directly or indirectly, upon preparations for war. Had Mr. Chamberlain adopted the policy of aloofness, which, I venture to maintain, was the right one, he would have been in a position to stop this accumulation of the munitions of war by a peremptory veto. Such action would have been justified independently of all questions as to our position as suzerain Power. It has always been held amongst civilized Powers that the Government of one country has the right to demand from the Government of another explanations of armaments which can only be directed against the inquiring Power. We have had quite recently a little illustration of this proposition. Attention has been called in the House of Commons to the difference created in the strategic position of Gibraltar by the use of long-range guns. It is not too much to say that if the Spanish Government mounted such guns at Algeciras in positions dominating the fortifications of Gibraltar and the anchorage of the fleet, explanations

[1] The *Cape Times* of March 24, 1900, reproduces from official (Transvaal) sources the expenditure of the Republic on military affairs from 1889 to 1898:

	£		£
'1889	75,523	1894	28,158
1890	42,999	1895	87,308
1891	117,927	1896	495,618
1892	99,739	1897	396,384
1893	19,340	1898 (for 9 months)	163,451

'Beyond these figures there are large payments for war material which are concealed under other heads of expenditure; for instance, in 1895 "sundry services" stood at £838,877; in 1896 "special payments" are set down for £682,008; and in 1897 "public works" show a grand total of £1,012,686. Over and above these items, which in themselves are so suspiciously large as fully to warrant the belief that they include part of the cost of armament, there is a yearly increasing total assigned to secret service, which has been as high as £120,000 a year; the spending of this is largely in the hands of Dr. Leyds, and it is a fair assumption that a portion thereof has been devoted to the acquisition of munitions of war. The Boers have been steadily arming for ten years past, if not more; they knew—or, at any rate, Kruger, Joubert, and Leyds knew—that war had to come sooner or later, and they determined not to be unprepared.'

would have been forthwith demanded. If none were forthcoming, and if these batteries were clearly erected for no other purpose than to render our position at Gibraltar untenable, then, without having any other cause of quarrel with Spain, we should have been brought very near to a declaration of war. But in South Africa our hands were fettered by that ridiculous assumption of unnecessary self-abasement of which I have written. To every warning which reached the Government as to the intentions of the South African Republic, and as to the preparations they were making to give effect to these intentions, there was one stereotyped answer: 'We cannot do anything because of the Raid.' The appointment of a Select Committee to 'inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company,' completed the work of paralysis. The British Government by the mouths of its Ministers had declared as categorically as was possible that they had neither part nor lot, collectively or individually, either in the Jameson Raid or in the conspiracy of which it was a disastrous incident. That was enough in all conscience. If amongst our neighbours there were those who did not believe the word of a British statesman, upon them lay the responsibility of charging the Imperial Government with wilful and deliberate falsehood. It was quite right to inquire into the origin of the Raid so far as British subjects were concerned in it. That was effectually accomplished by the Parliamentary inquiry which was held in the Cape of Good Hope, and by the prosecution of the ringleaders of the Raid before the Lord Chief Justice of England. Every Englishman is well aware that if almost any other statesman had been at the Colonial Office except Mr. Chamberlain there would have been, not only no inquiry, but no demand for an inquiry. The animosity with which Mr. Chamberlain has been pursued since 1886 had nothing whatever to do with his views upon Imperial or colonial policy. As a matter of fact, until the time that he selected for himself the post of Colonial Secretary in 1895, he was not credited either with special knowledge or special interest in colonial subjects. His offence in the eyes of the followers

of Mr. Gladstone was that he, more than any other man, had irretrievably smashed Mr. Gladstone's party into discordant atoms. From that time forth the attitude of those of his colleagues who had not joined him in his secession was summarized in the desire expressed by Mr. Labouchere at a later date to 'give Master Joe another nasty fall.' It mattered not to them that he carried with him British interests of a delicate and fragile character, which his 'nasty fall' must inevitably destroy. The one object of his enemies was *per fas et nefas* to hound him out of public life, and if in the hunt they destroyed invaluable property in which they as Englishmen were interested, so much the worse for the property. The appointment of a Select Committee by the House of Commons with the consent of the Government played into the hands of these opponents of Mr. Chamberlain, and inflicted great injury upon our reputation abroad. By a very simple process of reasoning most people convince themselves that a Committee of Inquiry implies the existence of a discreditable secret, and if no revelation is the result of such an inquiry, they assume that the investigators were 'squared' or that they were devoid of the most elementary intelligence. Whether or not Mr. Kruger ever believed that the Imperial Government was mixed up in the Jameson Raid, it suited his purpose admirably to feign such a belief. Mr. J. B. Robinson, a not impeccable witness, gave in the *Daily News* of January 16, 1900, his version of an interview with the President after the presentation of the report of the Committee and the subsequent debate in the House of Commons:[1]

I said: 'Well, President, you see what I have told you is right. The Committee have taken evidence, and their report deals with the conclusions that they have arrived at.' He said: 'Yes; what else is to follow those conclusions?' I replied: 'I must ask you to exercise a little patience and not come to any hasty decision upon the matter.' A few days later another cable was published, from which it appeared that some of the members of Parliament, in commenting upon the Committee's report, took the opportunity of speaking favourably of Mr. Rhodes. I went down to see the President again, and I shall never forget that morning. I entered the room, and he looked at me, shook hands, and motioned me to a chair. I sat down, but not a word did the President say, so I

[1] Quoted by Mr. E. T. Cook in 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' p. 73.

commenced: 'Anything fresh this morning, President?' He replied: 'No; there are some cables in the papers this morning, but the news that they convey is not fresh—not, at least, to me.' I answered: 'What do you mean?' He said: 'I am referring to the debate in the House of Commons.' I immediately saw the difficulty that confronted me as the President looked at me steadily and said: 'What do you think now of your friends and their assurances?' I replied: 'I have no doubt that the party who made that statement in Parliament conscientiously believed that what he said was true.' The old President then became irritable, and in a loud voice shouted at me: 'Do you mean to tell me as an intelligent man that you accept these statements, and that you believe in them? Do you think we are fools? Do you think for a moment that we do not know the true working of this Raid? Do you mean to tell me that you do not know that the men who organized and engineered this Raid organized it for their own benefit, and that they had decided how they would divide the Transvaal, how each of the party was to have certain interests in this country, and that many of the Reformers who were put in gaol were perfectly innocent and ignorant of the schemes of the men who were in the inner circle?' He continued: 'There are only twelve men in that inner circle, and they were to share the spoils and divide the Transvaal amongst themselves. They and their companies found the money for the Raid. Do you think we are so innocent as not to know that Mr. Rhodes, metaphorically speaking, held the pistol at the heads of certain men in England, and said to them: "If you do not support me, I will denounce you and your complicity in the Raid."' The President at this stage became more excited, and shouted so loudly that the people in the street stopped to overhear the conversation.[1]

It is unnecessary to go at any length into the question of the trial of the Reform prisoners. The names of the principal persons put upon their trial were extorted by fraud, and no one can read the reports of the interviews between the delegates of the Reform Committee and the

[1] I have a pendant to this story. When I was in South Africa in 1895, some six months before the Raid, a Reformer, who was afterwards imprisoned, told me a characteristic story of Mr. Kruger. My informant, with the late Mr. Barney Barnato and one or two others, went on a deputation to the President on some subject in which as capitalists they were interested. Mr. Kruger, as usual, evaded the issues, and endeavoured to put the deputation off with vague promises. At last Mr. Barnato, in his impatience, said to the interpreter: 'Tell his Honour that if he does not meet us we will cut off the water from Johannesburg.' (Mr. Barnato was chairman of the Waterworks Company.) My informant turned to Barnato and said: 'Now you've done it.' For the President, although he would never speak English, understood the language sufficiently well. Without waiting for the sentence to be interpreted to him, the President raised his arms in a gesture of dramatic indignation, and said, 'Go! you have threatened me. I will never speak to you again,' and pointed to the door. The deputation, with the exception of Mr. Barnato and the interpreter, left. My informant waited some time for Mr. Barnato, and at the end of some twenty minutes the door opened, and out came the President, Mr. Barnato, and the interpreter, with their faces wreathed in smiles, and chatting in the most friendly fashion. 'You've been squaring the old man,' said my informant to Mr. Barnato. 'Well,' was the reply, 'I did a little deal with him in diamonds—but ain't he a beggar to act?'

Boer Executive without realizing that the Reformers were duped into the belief that a general amnesty would follow on the disarmament of Johannesburg.

In spite of this fact and of the assurances given in the name of the Executive, Judge Gregorowski, imported for the express purpose of securing a verdict on the capital charge, passed the sentence of death upon George Farrar, Lionel Phillips, Colonel Rhodes, and John Hays Hammond, and ordered the rank and file to be imprisoned for two years, to pay a fine of £2,000 each, or an extra year's imprisonment, and to be banished from the Republic for three years. Their sentences were of course commuted.

Meantime (says Mr. Garrett in the 'Story of an African Crisis') the Reformers were herded together with every circumstance of discomfort in a corrugated-iron shed, hastily improvised for their accommodation within the precincts of Pretoria Gaol. The district surgeon warned the Government regarding the unsanitary condition of the place and the hardships suffered by the prisoners under its baking roof. But his representations passed unheeded, and on the 16th of May one of the prisoners (Gray), whose mind had become unhinged, was discovered to have committed suicide. . . . A few days later it was made known that the Executive had commuted the sentences of the leaders to fifteen years' imprisonment, and that three sick prisoners—Lionel Phillips being one of them—had been sent to the Volks Hospital. . . . On the 11th of June came the news that the four leaders were to be released immediately on payment of a fine of £25,000 each. Decree of banishment was waived on an agreement being entered into by each of the four not to be mixed up in politics again for the space of fifteen years. The fines were at once paid and the prisoners set free; Colonel Rhodes, refusing to sign the local bond, was conducted to the frontier, whence he speedily found his way to Rhodesia.

Mr. Kruger's object, apart from his desire to screw a large sum of money out of the prisoners, was obviously to enhance the heinousness of the offence which was to serve as one of his trump cards in South Africa and elsewhere. Dr. Farrelly tells us:[1]

'Dit is de eerste geboortsdag van der Afrikander natie' (this is the first birthday of the Afrikander nation) is said to have been the exclamation on hearing that Rhodesian troops had crossed the border of the veteran judge, who was negotiator[2] of the Convention of Majuba Hill. As a blow turns into ice water below freezing-point, so did the shock of the Raid unite all the Boers in the land. The more progressive Boers of the Transvaal, the Boers of the Orange Free State, who always maintained a

[1] 'Settlement after the War,' p. 114.

[2] Judge Jorissen.

liberal franchise, the Dutch colonists of the Cape and Natal, many of whom, unwitting of the old President's deeper designs, had sympathized with the Uitlanders in their grievances, became crystallized in a solid mass, henceforth never to be moved but by the cannon of the Empire.

This testimony is the more impartial in that it emanates from the man who drafted the reply to Mr. Chamberlain's famous despatch, though that reply bore the signature of Mr. Reitz. Naturally, the incidents to which I have referred induced Mr. Chamberlain to make a deeper study of the problems of South Africa than had hitherto been possible for him during the short time that he had been in office. His researches led him to the conclusion, to which they must have led any intelligent Englishman, that the revolution of Johannesburg and the Raid were but symptoms of a disease which was very deep-seated, malignant, and rapid in its development. From that time forth Mr. Chamberlain's policy was that of a man who had convinced himself beyond the possibility of doubt that the real issue in South Africa was whether the Transvaal and its autocratic Government, or Great Britain with its free institutions, was to be the paramount Power in that country. This discovery was no new one; it had been made by Mr. Merriman and by others as long ago as 1885. The goal of the Afrikander aspirations had been clearly designated, as I have shown, years before an ounce of gold had been extracted from the Witwatersrand. There were plenty of people of all classes in South Africa who thoroughly realized the situation; but it was not till the outbreak of the war that the true danger to Imperial interests in South Africa was realized even by public men in England. The reason is not far to seek. The aspirations of Mr. Kruger, Mr. Steyn, and the Afrikander Bond were not understood or even credited in this country, and the forces, actual and potential, at the disposal of the South African Republic were ludicrously underrated until the war had been three months in progress. It was not believed possible that a small Republic, consisting of a 'simple and pastoral people,' could conceive the design of defying one of the greatest Powers in the world. On this ignorance the President traded, as he traded very shrewdly on every point in the game which told in his favour.

It must not be inferred from the foregoing pages that in my judgment the ex-President of the South African Republic deserves all the tributes for statesmanship, diplomacy, and sagacity which have been paid to him by friends and foes alike. Nothing could be more grotesque than the sobriquet, bestowed upon him by his admirers, of 'the South African Bismarck.'

In the lower spheres of diplomacy Mr. Kruger was a master. He was quick in detecting the false moves made by his opponents, and an adept in turning them to his own advantage; but of the larger combinations he was hopelessly incapable. To secure a brilliant and conspicuous success to-day he was ready to squander the prospects of the future, if, indeed, he had the power of forecasting them. He was what I believe soldiers would call a brilliant tactician, but a hopeless strategist. Had he been a Bismarck the opportunities open to him, almost thrust upon him, in 1896 might have enabled him to drive out the English from South Africa. I do not mean that such an eviction would have been permanent, because the sixteenth-century methods of government to which Mr. Kruger was attached would have provoked a revolution within a very few years. But look at the actual situation, as it would have presented itself to a lesser genius than a Bismarck. From one end of South Africa to another the Dutch population, at least a moiety of the whole, was triumphant and exultant. People of British stock were humiliated and depressed. Men do not reason very closely in such moments of conscious degradation; they are only anxious to find a scapegoat on whose head to heap their own sense of debasement. They had been betrayed in the past by the Imperial Government; they had now been dragged involuntarily into a false and shameful position by the blundering of those whom they regarded as their colonial leaders. The consequence was that for the time they were, as nearly as Englishmen can be, ashamed of their name, and ready to take any hasty step which might seem to offer a chance of vindicating their manhood. The Outlanders of Johannesburg were incensed against both the Imperial authority and the clumsy tactics of the man who they had expected should be the founder of

United South Africa. Had Mr. Kruger grasped the situation he would have summoned the Outlanders to him, and have spoken to them somewhat as follows: 'Once more you have trusted to England in time of stress, and once more England has abandoned you, as she always will. Why not throw in your lot with me, and help me to establish in Africa the counterpart, and it may be the rival, of the great Republic across the Atlantic? Yours is the wealth and yours the enterprise. My Doppers care little for gold or position or political power; they ask to be allowed to live their lives after the fashion of their forefathers, to protect the isolation that they love, and to keep and observe their old customs and their old habits. What they require from you is that from the wealth you extract from the soil a portion shall be set aside sufficient to carry out the business of government without calling upon the agriculturists to contribute. For myself and mine I ask for the government of the country in accordance with laws passed by a Parliament in which you must necessarily exercise a considerable influence. With the Dutch in the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony, there will always be enough Boers to prevent our being ridden rough-shod over by the foreign element. To be frank with you, I know that you Outlanders will be divided amongst yourselves on many important questions. We Dutch shall act together, as you have seen, and therefore I do not fear the results of recognising an absolute equality from the Zambesi to Cape Agulhas. Your interests, as ever, will be concentrated in the larger towns. If you co-operate with me, I will arrange that there shall be the most extensive and uncontrolled powers of self-government granted to municipalities. To those of you who are Englishmen, I say that a great authority in the person of Mr. Froude has told you that all that England requires are coaling-stations and a maritime fortress in the Cape Peninsula. Apart from the influence which you must necessarily wield, from your numbers, your wealth, and your enterprise, in the Congress of the United States of South Africa, we other Dutch should not be so mad as to provoke a quarrel with Great Britain. Years must elapse before we should be able to provide adequate protection for our coasts against foreign invasion.

We know that the wealth already discovered in our country is but an infinitesimal fraction of that which lies buried beneath the soil, and we know, too, that that wealth would furnish an irresistible temptation to European Powers to annex us, unless we had so cordial an understanding with Great Britain as would secure for our protection the advantages which she enjoys from the command of the sea. Let bygones be bygones, and let us Afrikanders, English, and Dutch add to our motto "Union is strength," in all sincerity and good faith, "Forgive and forget."'

Of course, it is impossible to say what would have been the answer to such overtures had President Kruger been gifted with breadth of view enough to make them. For my own part, I feel assured that the incentives of conscious race superiority would, in the long-run, have burst the bonds thus ingeniously forged; but I am very far indeed from feeling so sure that at the moment they would not have succeeded, and temporary success would have meant the exclusion of South Africa from membership in the British Empire. The English-speaking race would, no doubt, have ultimately absorbed authority and power; but the position of that English-speaking race would have been the position of the English-speaking citizens of the United States of America, and not that of beyond-the-sea subjects of the Sovereign of the United Kingdom. Fortunately for those of us who think, to use the words of one of Lord Milner's speeches, 'the Empire counts for something,' Mr. Kruger was too myoptic a statesman to see so far ahead. If the comparison to Prince Bismarck is ludicrously flattering, the same might be said of likening him to Hannibal. Mr. Kruger, however, had this trait in common with the Carthaginian—that, though he could win victories, he could not turn them to account. He utilized the formidable catalogue of advantages which I have set forth to strengthen and perpetuate that part of his system which was destined inevitably to compass his downfall and that of his Republic. The chief result of his triumph was to induce him to treat the seeds of disease within his Republic as the Irish landlord dealt with his bills, when he threw them in the fire and thanked God that they were done with. If Mr. Chamberlain had made a mistake in the first

move in the great game he was called upon to play, it was an error which could be, and which was triumphantly rectified. Mr. Kruger so mismanaged his opening advantage that every move he made after led directly and irremediably to checkmate. Mr. Chamberlain, however, must have recognised the impossibility of continuing the game through the medium of Sir Hercules Robinson. I have no intention whatever of criticising in a censorious temper the later conduct of Lord Rosmead (as Sir Hercules Robinson ultimately became). In his time he had been a very useful public servant. In one great crisis in South Africa—that which arose out of the Boer raiding of Bechuanaland—he had shown himself capable of acting with firmness and sagacity in defiance of a Cape Ministry which rested upon the support of the Afrikander Bond. But had there not been other causes, his judgment must always have suffered from a recollection of the circumstances to which he owed his first appointment in South Africa. He had been nominated to succeed one of the few real statesmen sent to South Africa, who, realizing the incalculable value of that country to the Empire, endeavoured to establish permanently the Imperial authority. Every one of these genuine Imperialists—D'Urban, Sir George Grey, Sir Bartle Frere—had been recalled in disgrace. Sir Bartle Frere, indeed, had been sacrificed, to use the never-to-be-forgotten words of Mr. Leonard Courtney, to 'conduce to the unity of the Liberal party.' Sir Hercules Robinson owed his position to the sacrificants, and the man who had clamoured for the immolation of Sir Bartle Frere upon the altar of party interests was a powerful member of the inner circle of Sir Hercules' nominators. The splendid but pathetic ghost of the great Warden of the Marches seems not to have disturbed the tranquillity of the sacrificants, but it must have haunted Government House at Cape Town during the whole of his successor's tenancy. Apart, however, from this, when the second crisis in the history of British South Africa occurred, Sir Hercules Robinson was an old man, and had completely lost his nerve; otherwise he would not have allowed Mr. Hofmeyr, the leader of the Afrikander Bond, to dictate to him what should be his conduct and what

his policy at the supreme moment of the crisis created by the Raid. Those who had known Sir Hercules Robinson during his first tenure of the High Commissionership were shocked and alarmed by the physical change wrought in the few years which intervened before his return to Government House.

CHAPTER IX

THE ARRIVAL OF LORD MILNER

UPON the choice of a successor to Sir Hercules Robinson, whose health had completely broken down, and who died not long afterwards, depended the future of South Africa. There is a story current which I have purposely refrained from verifying, because, whether true or only well-found, it is illustrative. The appointment of the High Commissioner rests, of course, primarily with the Secretary of State for the Colonies; but in selections to all the most important Imperial offices the Prime Minister necessarily has the last, as he sometimes has the first, word. It is said that when Mr. Chamberlain had made up his mind to the selection of Sir Alfred Milner, as he then was, he went to Lord Salisbury, and said:

'I have found the right man for South Africa.'

'So have I,' replied the Prime Minister.

Mr. Chamberlain, somewhat taken aback, said:

'My man is Sir Alfred Milner.'

'So is mine,' answered Lord Salisbury.

Whether the story as told is literally correct I cannot say, but I happen to know that Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain did arrive independently at the conclusion that Sir Alfred Milner was the man and the only man peculiarly fitted for the post. In the *National Review* for April, 1901, there appeared an article of mine, from which I extract the following:

'Sir Alfred Milner had the rare merit of commanding the confidence of public men of very divergent schools of politics to a degree for which it would be difficult to find a parallel. He owed this universal reputation for broad-mindedness,

independence, and impartiality—I am not speaking now of his intellectual endowments—entirely to the records of his own public and private life. He was not, to use a convenient colloquialism, at all "in the swim." He had no conspicuous social standing, nor was he backed by powerful connections or by inherited influence. He came into official life in England with nothing behind him but the records of a very distinguished University career and the unqualified admiration and respect of all his contemporaries. Moreover, in an age of which self-advertisement is not the least striking characteristic, Alfred Milner was singularly lacking in all the varied accomplishments which are necessary for the successful prosecution of that art. It was to these facts that the memorable dinner given to him on March 27, 1897, on the eve of his departure for South Africa, owed its special significance. It is our pleasant English habit to give our friends a send-off banquet whenever they start upon a new departure, whether it be matrimony, business, or politics. It was not, therefore, the compliment itself, but the position and the opinions of the people who paid it, that made this particular banquet so remarkable. Most of us at some period or other of our lives have been constrained to give testimonials about the sincerity of which our consciences would not stand very severe cross-examination. But no one feels it incumbent upon himself to take part in a quite informal celebration, such as this emphatically was, unless he particularly wishes to do honour to the guest of the evening. As a matter of fact, the Milner dinner grew out of the desire of his personal friends and contemporaries at Oxford to entertain him without fuss or ceremony before he left England. So eager, however, were many distinguished persons who had not the requisite qualifications to assist at this function that Mr. St. John Brodrick and Mr. Lyttleton Gell, to whom the arrangements for the dinner as originally designed had been entrusted, found it necessary considerably to enlarge its scope. And so it came to pass that at the dinner at the Café Monico there were gathered together as remarkable a selection of men as it would be possible to find in company to do honour to one who, until his appointment, was virtually a private individual. I will cite just a few

names, taken alphabetically from the list before me: Mr. Asquith was in the chair, and amongst others present were Mr. A. H. Acland, M.P., Sir W. Anson, Mr. Arthur Balfour, M.P., Mr. Leonard Courtney, M.P., Mr. Goschen, M.P., Mr. Haldane, M.P., Mr. H. Hobhouse, M.P., Sir C. Ilbert, Sir Francis Jeune, Lord Monteagle, Mr. John Morley, Mr. H. W. Paul, Mr. G. W. E. Russell, Archdeacon Sinclair, Mr. Spender, Mr. Julian Sturgis, Sir Algernon West, and Mr. George Wyndham. Lord Rosebery and Sir William Harcourt, who had both desired to attend, were absentees. Both, however, wrote letters of regret, which differed as much from the formal type of such productions as the dinner differed from other functions of a similar character. Lord Rosebery wrote from Edinburgh:

It is impossible for me to be in London to-morrow night, and so I cannot attend the Milner banquet. This is a source of great regret to me, but Milner will know that my absence is not due to any want of appreciation of him or of the occasion. He has a brilliant past, but has a still greater career before him, for he has the union of intellect with fascination, which makes men mount high.

And Sir William Harcourt, who is not one to indulge in effusiveness, wrote:

I deeply regret that my present flabby condition disables me from private pleasures as well as public duties, and, if permitted, I must go out of town to-morrow afternoon for a few days' change of air. It is with very deep regret and sincere disappointment that I am compelled to be absent from that interesting gathering of the friends and admirers of Alfred Milner, amongst whom I reckon myself to rank with the first, and am certainly the most grateful and obliged. I feel sure that he and his friends will be aware that, though the flesh is weak, my spirit will be with you in the notable recognition to be given to a man deserving of all praise and all affection.

This notable recognition, as Sir William Harcourt in anticipation described it, was destined to be as distinguished by the speeches which marked it as by the company which made it. Mr. Asquith's speech might well serve as a model on such occasions, if such occasions were sufficiently frequent to demand a stereotyped form of after-dinner speaking. I will quote one passage:

It was the hand of Mr. Goschen which first unlocked for Sir Alfred Milner the doors of the permanent Civil Service, and I venture to say that within our recollection there has been no case of the selection of a

young and comparatively untried man for high and responsible work which has reflected more honour upon the insight and foresight of a Minister, and been more fruitful of advantage to a public service itself. The rest of Sir Alfred Milner's career has become a matter of history. His financial and administrative genius has found itself equally at home in wrestling with the inextricable complexities of an Egyptian Budget and in exploring new sources of revenue for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This is a remarkable retrospect for a man who can hardly claim to enjoy the somewhat qualified privileges of middle age. To have studied scholarship and metaphysics under Jowett and Green, the art of writing under Mr. John Morley, to have been introduced to official life by Mr. Goschen, to have learned the practice of administration under Lord Cromer, and the discharge of the delicate and responsible duties which fall to the permanent head of a great department of the State under Mr. Balfour and Sir William Harcourt, is as unique as it is a fortunate experience. It is, indeed, an experience calculated to equip a man for the discharge of the most arduous task which the State can call upon any of its citizens to perform. To such a task he has been summoned by what I will venture to describe as the wise and happy discrimination of Mr. Chamberlain. Those of us who are his old friends have seen with pleasure, but without surprise, that no appointment of our time has been received with a larger measure both of the approbation of experienced men and of the applause of the public. . . . Under a strong sense of public duty he is quitting a post of which the work is congenial and familiar, and which presents to a man of his faculties and training no insoluble difficulties, for one of which it is no exaggeration to say that at the present moment it is the most arduous and responsible in the administrative service of the country, a post in which he will find himself beset in every direction with embarrassing problems, and, may I be bold enough to add, with formidable personalities. We not only wish him success, but we believe he will succeed. We know that he takes with him as clear an intellect and as sympathetic an imagination, and, if need should arise, a power of resolution as tenacious and as inflexible, as belong to any man of our acquaintance. We are met here to-night to assure him that he carries with him also, and will keep, the affectionate interest of a body of friends who, amid the tests and trials of many and varied conjunctions, have learned to rely with very great confidence upon the soundness of his judgment and the warmth of his heart.

It would be an insult to Mr. Asquith to suggest, even if his words did not give the lie to such a suggestion, that he spoke in strains of insincere formality. No one is better qualified on such occasions as these to mete out measured approbation than a distinguished lawyer, trained to weigh his words. Merely for the sake of contrast, I will set beside this tribute the criticism at a later date of the *South African News*, inspired, if not written, by Mr. Merriman—'The blind, narrow-minded, conceited and infatuated mediocrity that sits at Government House'; or the singularly infelicitous phrase of the *Speaker*, which describes Sir Alfred Milner as 'a garden-party satrap.' I must quote also a few words of

Alfred Milner's reply, because they reveal the spirit in which he approached the task of which Mr. Asquith had truly said that it was the 'most arduous and responsible' which could be committed to any Englishman.

A public servant (he said) must go where he is wanted. He is singularly fortunate if he is wanted for that kind of business to which he is most willing that all his energies should be devoted. Now, someone has said of public work that one class of public questions interests one man, and another class another. I do not attempt to estimate their relative importance. All I know is, that for myself personally no questions have ever had at all the same attractions as those relating to the position of this country in the outside world, and especially the future of Greater Britain. May I be permitted on this occasion, Mr. Asquith, to recall another evening spent by us at the Oxford Union more than twenty years ago, in a company like this, which includes no fewer than eleven ex-Presidents of the Union, and if I may be allowed to add myself, a round dozen. On that occasion you, as now, were in the chair, and the subject of debate was the possibility of strengthening the ties which unite to this country the great colonies and the great colonies to one another. The subject excited less interest than others which we debated in those days—less, I am glad to think, than it would excite at the present moment. But there were some half-dozen of us who hammered away—I dare say we bored our audience—on these ideas, that the growth of the colonies into self-governing communities was no reason why they should drop away from the mother-country or from one another; that the complete political separation of the two great sections of the English-speaking race was a dire disaster, not only in the manner in which it came about, but for the coming about at all; that there was no political object comparable in importance with that of preventing a repetition of such a disaster, the severance of another link in the great Imperial chain. The greatest local independence, we then argued, was not incompatible with closer and more effective union for common purposes. I am interested to remember that our leader on that occasion, the man who made by far the most powerful and effective speech on our side, was not an Englishman at all, but a Canadian—a member, that is to say, of a community which has solved the problem of uniting on the basis of absolutely equal citizenship men of different races and language, who have remained bound by very strong ties of loyalty and affection to the mother-country. . . There is one question on which I have not been able to see the other side, and that is precisely this question of Imperial unity. My mind is not so constructed that I am capable of understanding the arguments of those who question its desirability or possibility. I admit that the sentiment, the desire to strengthen the ties which unite the different portions of the Empire, though rapidly growing, may not yet be so powerful or so universal that any great step is possible in our time. . . . It is a great privilege to be allowed to fill any position in the character of what I may be, perhaps, allowed to call a 'civilian soldier of the Empire'; to succeed in it, to render any substantial service to any part of our world-wide State, would be all that in any of my most audacious dreams I had ever ventured to aspire to; but in a cause in which one absolutely believes, even if I were to fail, the cause itself is not going to fail; and even personal failure is preferable to an easy life of comfortable prosperity in another sphere.

It will serve the immediate purpose of this article, in

view of the sinister objects attributed to Mr. Chamberlain and to his choice of what, with grotesque incongruity, has been called 'his ready and sympathetic tool,' to quote Mr. Chamberlain's declaration of the policy which Sir Alfred Milner was specially invited to carry out:

> As we (he said) on our part are ready at all times to extend to our Dutch fellow-subjects with open hands all the privileges which we enjoy ourselves, and as we have shown again and again by our declarations and by our actions that we have no intention and no desire to interfere with the independence of neighbouring States, surely we may entertain the hope that the Government of the Transvaal will come to see that it is its duty to fulfil to the letter obligations which it has voluntarily assumed in connection with the London Conventions, and that it will in time extend the hand of fellowship to that large number of foreigners who have contributed so largely to the success and to the prosperity of that State. It may be true, as we have recently had suggested to us, that there are eminent persons in South Africa who have aspirations for an independent federation of States under which Dutch influence would be predominant, and which would look for sympathy and support rather to the Continent of Europe than to this country. If such aspirations exist, in my opinion they are incompatible with the position of the Cape itself, the most important strategical point in the Empire, the possession of which is absolutely necessary to us as a great Eastern Power. It is an aspiration which cannot be accepted by the people of this country, and until it is frankly abandoned there cannot be a final and satisfactory settlement. But, short of this, we are ready now and at all times to give the fairest and most favourable consideration to the wishes and sentiments, even to the prejudices, of parties in South Africa, and to co-operate with them in all measures for the good of the whole community.

It is not in the nature of Englishmen to become good conspirators. Perhaps the Raid of unhappy memory was in inception, development, and execution the most grotesque travesty of what the Dutch call a 'complot' that can be found in the annals of serious history. It is inconceivable, therefore, and 'inconceivable' is a ludicrously inadequate word, that an English statesman should have schemed so deep a plot as that with which Mr. Chamberlain is now credited, or that, having schemed it, he should have selected for his principal agent such a man as Sir Alfred Milner. Or, to push the extravagance further, that Mr. Chamberlain, being so conspicuous a villain and Sir Alfred Milner so complacent and so pliable a tool, these two should have succeeded in attracting so remarkable a gathering of illustrious dupes, and then have deliberately set to work to place imperishably on record the evidence that must irretrievably

damn them when the true nature of their conspiracy was in due course revealed. Yet, unless there is something in this preposterous theory, the only other alternative is that the present-day critics of Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner are hopelessly, fatuously, and utterly wrong.

The state of mind of the Transvaal Government at the time of Lord Milner's appointment may be gathered from the terms in which Mr. Kruger dealt with Mr. Chamberlain's proposal that he should pay a visit to England and discuss matters with him.[1]

The general tendency of your telegram made him fear that an interference with internal matters was intended, but since receipt of your reply he observes with satisfaction that that fear was not justified, and he again declares himself prepared to accept invitation. Although the Government could not tolerate interference with its internal relations, and the official discussion of affairs with the object of requiring changes therein will have to be avoided, at the same time private hints from statesmen of experience in the true interests of the country and its independence will always be warmly appreciated, from whatever side they come.

With these prefatory remarks, which dispose of the possibility of Mr. Kruger's belief in Mr. Chamberlain's complicity in the Raid, he proceeds to sum up the points which in his opinion should be under discussion.

First, withdrawal of London Convention of 1884, because in several respects it has virtually ceased to exist, because in other respects it has no more cause for existence, because it is injurious to the dignity of an independent Republic, because the continual arguments on the question of suzerainty, which since the conclusion of London Convention of 1884 no longer exists, are used as a pretext, especially by a libellous press, for inciting white and black against the Republic, and for bringing about misunderstanding between England and South African Republic. In the discussion of withdrawal of London Convention of 1884, Article No. IV. should naturally not be kept back.[2] He believes British Government have decided to make no alteration in this article on false representation that Government of South African Republic have sought protection of other Powers. He asserts there is nothing further from his thoughts than

[1] Blue-book C. 8063, p. 8.

[2] It may be convenient to reproduce Article No. IV., though it has already been given:

'The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen. Such article shall be considered to have been granted if Her Majesty's Government shall not, within six months after receiving a copy of such treaty (which shall be delivered to them immediately upon its completion), have notified that the conclusion of such treaty is in conflict with the interests of Great Britain or of any of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa.'

the protection of any foreign Power, which he will never seek. Neither he nor his people will tolerate an interference with their internal relations from any Power whatever, and he is willing to give the necessary assurances for this in order that Her Majesty's Government need have no fear that Her Majesty's interests in South Africa will be injured.

Secondly, the substitution should be discussed of any treaties of peace, friendship, and commerce in lieu of London Convention of 1884, by which the existing privileges of England in the dominion of commerce and intercourse and the interests of British subjects in South African Republic will be guaranteed on the footing of the most favoured nation, and herein he will be prepared to go to the utmost of what can reasonably be asked.

Thirdly will have to be discussed the required guarantees against a repetition of violation of territory proceeding from territory of British South Africa Company or the Cape, and of disturbing military operations and unlawful military or police, or even private movements on border of South African Republic.

Fourthly should be discussed compensations for direct and indirect injury to be given or caused to be given by England for the recent Raid. The amount to be demanded will, if required, be given before his departure for England.

These are the four points on which the President of South African Republic considers discussion indispensable, but there are three others which he would very much like to have discussed, in reference to which, however, he does not insist on an assurance beforehand. They are:

1. Final settlement of Swaziland Question with a view to its becoming part of South African Republic.

2. In connection with Swaziland regulation favourable to South African Republic as regards disposition of Zambann's territory and Umbegesa's; and

3. Revocation of charter of British South Africa Company, which, if it does not take place, will continue a threatened danger to the peace of South African Republic, and therefore also to the whole of South Africa.[1]

Compliance with his demands (he said) will pave the way for the making of a firm bond of friendship which should exist if South Africa is to see a prosperous future. He declares himself prepared for a voluntary and hearty co-operation, and believes that in this he is the interpreter of every true Afrikander. He will be pleased to receive the views of Her Majesty's Government in order that he may submit the matter for the decision of his Volksraad.

Mr. Chamberlain, of course, replied that

it was with great surprise that Her Majesty's Government learnt from the dispatch of the President[2] that His Honour objected to discuss the question of the reforms asked for by the Uitlanders, and that he desired to propose withdrawal of Article IV. of the Convention, and Her Majesty's Government regret that they were not informed of His Honour's views on the subject at an earlier date, as they would not have felt justified in

[1] It is interesting to compare this claim to dictate a question of internal relations of the Empire with his refusal to entertain 'official discussion' of the internal relations of the South African Republic.

[2] Quoted above.

inviting the President to encounter the fatigue of a journey to this country if they had not been led to believe that he was in agreement with them as to the general object of such a visit.

In their view Her Majesty's Government were able to offer a complete guarantee in the future to the South African Republic against any attack upon its independence either from within any part of Her Majesty's dominion or from the territory of a foreign Power. In return, they assumed that the President would make known to them the measures which he proposed to take to remedy the acknowledged grievances of the Uitlanders, and to consider any suggestions which Her Majesty's Government might wish to offer as to the adequacy of these measures for the removal of all cause of internal disturbances. Such a settlement would be a guarantee of peace and perpetual amity between the Dutch and British races in the Republic, and would open the way to the friendly discussion of all other matters of controversy or mutual interest. Her Majesty's Government have only to add with regard to their previous declarations about Article IV. that they believe that this provision of the Convention is as desirable in the interest of the Republic as in that of Great Britain, and it is an essential condition of the guarantee which they would be prepared to give as to the independence of the State.[1]

To this President Kruger replied on March 17, 1896:[2]

It grieves me more than I can express to be obliged to declare that the reply now received has caused me deep disappointment, and that by reason of the contents thereof it is not possible for me to proceed to convene a special session of the Volksraad at once for the purpose abovementioned. I must state to my deep regret that I do not feel at liberty to take that course, and that I cannot take the responsibility upon myself, since I am firmly convinced that the people of the Republic would, without a doubt, disapprove of such an unusual step, when the reply of Her Majesty's Government differs in so many essential respects from what I have submitted. I need hardly point out that this difference, apart from matters of less importance, seems to confine itself chiefly to the question of a discussion or treatment of internal affairs of the Republic which Her Majesty's Government appears to desire, but to which I may not give my consent as head of an independent State. I have already said that I would appreciate the giving of private hints in the interest of, and in the confirmation of the independence of the country; but I neither can nor may I lend a helping hand to giving an opening by another way to the discussion of internal affairs which would involve the acknowledgment of the principle that the right exists to do so.

There is, further, a very important difference between the view of Her Majesty's Government and mine with reference to the question of Clause IV. of the Convention of 1884, which Her Majesty's Government wish should form a part of a new *Convention*, or treaty.[3]

I spoke of the substitution of the Convention by a treaty of peace, amity, and commerce on the basis of the most favoured nation, while in the telegraphical communication under reply mention is made of a new *Convention*, or a treaty, for commercial *and other purposes*. There are other matters which will immediately appear from a comparison of my former communication with the reply thereto. While, for instance, the question of a guarantee against violation of the territory of the Republic

[1] C. 8063, p. 16. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[3] The italics are Mr. Kruger's.

is offered by the Secretary of State in a most extended sense, this Government would regard a guarantee from the British side, such as was asked in my despatch of the 25th of February last, as sufficient with regard to British territory.

Having regard to the points for discussion proposed by me, which this Government from its standpoint thinks to be able to bring forward with success, it is not clear to me unless further explained what is meant by the giving of concessions on this side.

You will permit me to remark further, with reference to the point of compensation, that I can in no wise agree with the comparison made by the Honourable the Secretary of State between the inroad of Dr. Jameson and the part which may have been taken by subjects of the Republic (it would have been more correct to say by persons from various parts of South Africa) in earlier days[1] in the Goshen, Stellaland, and Zululand questions. Their actions would under no circumstances have been construed as a breach of the Convention, and the actions of Dr. Jameson *cum suis* in every respect were.[2]

Even under this diplomatic guise it is easy to read the determination of President Kruger to secure the absolute independence of the South African Republic with or without ulterior designs, such as were entertained by a very large number, if not the majority, of Afrikanders. On this point I prefer the testimony of the first and last of the remarkable letters published over the signature of 'P. S.' in the *Times* and the *Morning Post*. I have satisfied myself, not of the name of the writer, which I do not profess to know, but of the fact that he is a genuine Afrikander, who may be taken to represent the more intellectual of the Dutch aspiring to form a Republican United States in South Africa. The first of these letters appeared in the *Times* of October 14, 1886:[3]

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

SIR,

In your paper you have often commented on what you are pleased to call the ignorance of my countrymen the Boers. We are not so ignorant as the British statesmen and newspaper-writers, nor are we such fools as you British are. We know our policy and we do not change it. We have no Opposition party to fear nor to truckle to. Your boasted Conservative majority has been the obedient tool of a Radical minority, and the Radical minority has been the blind tool of our far-seeing and intelligent President. We have desired delay, and we have had it, and we are now practically masters of Africa from the Zambesi to the Cape.

[1] Only eleven years before.

[2] C. 8036, p. 21.

[3] The prefatory note added by the editor of the *Times* ran as follows: 'We have received the following letter appropriately headed "Boer Ignorance." The writer bears a well-known Dutch name, and gives as his late address the name of a well-known town (Colesburg) in a Dutch district of Cape Colony.'

All the Afrikanders in Cape Colony have been working for years for this end, for they and we know the facts.

1. The actual value of the gold in the Transvaal is at least 200,000 millions of pounds.[1] And this fact is as well known to the Emperors of Germany and Russia as it is to us. You estimate the value of the gold at only 700 millions of pounds, or, at least, that is what you pretend to estimate it at. But Germany, Russia, and France do not desire you to get possession of this vast mass of gold; and so, after encouraging you to believe that they will not interfere in South Africa, they will certainly do so, and very easily find a *casus belli*, and they will assist us directly and indirectly to drive you out of Africa.

2. We know that you dare not take any precautions in advance to prevent the onslaught of the Great Powers, as the Opposition—the great peace party—will raise the question of expense, and this will win over your lazy, dirty, drunken working classes, who will never again permit themselves to be taxed to support your Empire, or even to preserve your existence as a nation.

3. We know from all the military authorities of the European and American continents that you exist as an independent Power merely on sufferance, and that at any moment the great Emperor William can arrange with France or Russia to wipe you off the face of the earth. They can at any time starve you into surrender. You must yield in all things to the United States also, or your supply of corn will be so reduced by the Americans that your working classes would be compelled to pay high prices for their food, and rather than do that they would have civil war, and invite any foreign Power to assist them by invasion, for there is no patriotism in the working classes of England, Wales, or Ireland.

4. We know that your country has been more prosperous than any other country during the last fifty years (you have had no civil war like the Americans and French to tone up your nerves and strengthen your manliness), and, consequently, your able-bodied men will not enlist in your so-called voluntary army. Therefore you have to hire the dregs of your population to do your fighting, and they are deficient in physique, in moral and mental ability, and in all the qualities that make good fighting men.

5. Your military officers we know to be merely pedantic scholars or frivolous society men, without any capacity for practical warfare with white men. The Afridis were more than a match for you, and your victory over the Sudanese was achieved because those poor people had not a rifle among them.

6. We know that your men, being the dregs of your people, are naturally feeble . . . as all your Government returns plainly show, and that they cannot endure the hardships of war.

7. We know that the entire British race is rapidly decaying. Your birth-rate is rapidly falling; your children are born weak, diseased, and deformed; and that the major part of your population consists of females, cripples, epileptics, consumptives, cancerous people, invalids and lunatics of all kinds, whom you carefully nourish and preserve.

8. We know that nine-tenths of your statesmen and higher officials, military and naval, are suffering from kidney diseases, which weaken their courage and will-power, and makes them shirk all responsibility as far as possible.

[1] Mr. Bleloch, in 'The New South Africa,' published this year, which is a most valuable work, puts the total value of the gold available for practical mining in the Rand itself at 2,871 millions sterling.

9. We know that your navy is big, but we know that it is not powerful, and that it is honeycombed with disloyalty—as witness the theft of the signal-books, the assaults on officers, the desertions and the wilful injury of the boilers and machinery which all the vigilance of the officers is powerless to prevent.

10. We know that the Conservative Government is a mere sham, and that it largely reduced the strength of the British artillery in 1888-89. And we know that it does not dare now to call out the militia for training, nor to mobilize the fleet, nor to give sufficient to the line and volunteers for ammunition to enable them to become good marksmen and efficient soldiers. We know that British soldiers and sailors are immensely inferior as marksmen, not only to Germans, French, and Americans, but also to Japanese, Afridis, Chilians, Peruvians, Belgians, and Russians.

11. We know that no British Government dares to propose any form of compulsory military or naval training, for the British people would rather be invaded, conquered, and governed by Germans, French, or Russians than be compelled to serve their own Government.

12. We Boers know that we will not be governed by a set of British curs, but that we will drive you out of Africa altogether, and the other manly nations, which have compulsory military service—the armed manhood of Europe—will very quickly divide all your other possessions between them.

Talk no more of the ignorance of the Boers or Cape Dutch; a few days more[1] will prove your ignorance of the British position, and in a short space of time you and your Queen will be imploring the good offices of the great German Emperor to deliver you from your disasters, for your humiliations are not yet complete. For thirty years the Cape Dutch have been waiting their chance, and now their day has come; they will throw off their mask and your yoke at the same instant, and 300,000 Dutch heroes will trample you under foot. We can afford to tell you the truth now, and in this letter you have got it.[2]

Read side by side with this the last letter over the

[1] This was written just before our early disasters.

[2] Compare this with Dr. Farelly's statement, in 'The Settlement after the War,' p. 95, of a conversation which he had on 'a May day of 1891 in the garden of the Middle Temple' with a friend who is of old Huguenot name and a lawyer of the Temple, who said to him: '"In South Africa we shall drive the British into the sea." . . . In the fierce glare of a Bloemfontein day of March of 1897 I met my friend again holding high office in the Orange Free State. We talked of many things, but one of his first questions was: "Do you still think of the millennium as in the gardens of the Temple? We shall drive the British into the sea." I said: "They shall be as dead and gone as the red and white roses plucked in the Temple gardens 500 years ago, and as forgotten as the wars of York and Lancaster." "No, not quite so forgotten; they can keep Simonstown and the Bay." This was the confederation week of March, 1897, which linked the Orange Free State to the fortunes of the Vaal River Republic. I had returned from attending the "Kwaije Vrouw" banquet, and a perfectly harmless phrase of President Kruger was being wildly telegraphed over the world. The latest, although I hope not the last, time I met my friend was in a Johannesburg club in September, 1899, in the dark and gloomy days during the exodus of the Uitlanders. He said: "Goodbye; we should have preferred this war twenty years later; we may fail, but we shall do our best. You did not believe my prophecies years ago; you believe them now." I said: "Of war I did not believe them; but of success, you will be led to believe mine."'

signature of 'P.S.' which appeared in the *Morning Post* of July 26, 1901:

This is the last letter I shall address to you on this subject, as I am anxious to proceed at the earliest moment to my beloved but almost ruined land; but before closing this I would repeat that we Dutch were perfectly justified in declaring war against you, and if the time and circumstances now were as they were exactly two years ago I would still vote for war against Great Britain, for the chances were fully ten to one in our favour then. We had contemplated and calculated on the chances of war for many years. From Oudtshoorn to Calvinia and from Cape Town to Colesberg there were very few Dutch who did not dream of war and a great Dutch Republic, even in the middle of the last century, during your war with Russia, when you were compelled to employ Germans, Italians, Swiss and Turks, because you could not get enough Britishers to enlist in your army. Your subsequent success in quelling the Indian Mutiny and destroying Theodore of Abyssinia annihilated our hopes and delayed our schemes; but when your forces were destroyed by the clubs of the Zulus at Isandhlwana, and we saw the terror of the English men, women and children in the Cape Colony, we concluded that your race had lost all pluck and capacity for fighting. It was this which encouraged the Transvaal not only to demand, but to fight you for their independence. It was this which made the men of the Orange Free State and of Cape Colony declare that they would join the Transvaal if you did not yield to every demand the Transvaal made. Your Government then dared not face the combined forces of the Dutch in South Africa, and so you surrendered everything under the hypocritical plea of magnanimity. Your Government could deceive itself and the British people; it could not deceive us nor the world at large. Karl Borckenhagen, the agent of Bismarck, was soon at work, and became the father of the Bond, and Reitz and Steyn were his pupils. Mr. J. S. Smit published the creed of the Afrikanders in the *Volksstem;* the Amsterdam *Handelsblad* in 1882 preached of the future of Holland in Africa, and of the extinction of the English language there. Every event that occurred induced us to believe in the weakness, the flabbiness, the squeezeability of England. Finally, your surrender of Madagascar, and the flight of your fleet from the Russians at Port Arthur, completely determined us that we would thrust you out of Africa, and that we could easily do it. We judged not of the English of 1790 to 1815, but we judged of the British as they were in 1860 to 1899. We knew we had not to deal with the magnificent British statesmen of the beginning of the nineteenth century, but only with the Uriah Heeps and Pecksniffs, the humble and peace-at-any-price jelly-fish, who have occupied all the places in your Cabinet during the last fifty years. It is your accursed cant of peace, of concession, of conciliation, of graceful surrender, of economy and of anti-militarism, which has brought disgrace on your Empire and made the name of Britisher to stink throughout the world. It is that which has brought war into Africa and has destroyed my brethren and my property. If you had been a strong military nation, such as the French, Russians or Germans, no thought of rebellion, no thought of war, would have ever entered our heads. We should have been proud and happy to be citizens of a mighty Empire. But you blighted the British Empire with your blasphemous cant against war, war which is God's most powerful instrument for the purification and elevation of the human race; while the whole and sole object you had in view was to escape from your duties to the world, and to save money thereby in order to spend it in licentiousness

and luxuries, such as have ever brought the nations of old to ruin and destruction. By the grace of God you have had a warning in Africa at our expense. I dare not rebel against the decrees of the Almighty. I can only pray that both Boer and Briton may profit by the terribly expensive and painful lessons we both have had, and that soon we may be united in one all-powerful and imperishable Empire, in which cant, superstition, hypocrisy and discord shall cease to exist, and justice, integrity, and duty shall reign supreme.[1]

Lord Milner's life had been spent under the eyes of the public, and amidst a circle of acquaintances so large and comprehensive as practically to represent all that was best in English society. Even those who have most adversely criticised his policy and action in South Africa have never denied him the merit of a complete consistency in political principle. As he was when he first presented himself to the Oxford Union Debating Society, so he was when he took up what Mr. Asquith described as the most onerous and responsible post in the Empire. His judgment of men and his attitude towards parties were no doubt modified by the development of events and the rise of unexpected problems, but the guiding-star of his whole career was his intense belief in the future of the Empire and of the beneficial part it was to play in the great drama of human progress. As he himself said at the farewell banquet, he had been amongst the first of the young men to recognise that the confederation of the Empire was the goal to which all political effort should be directed. From this belief he never swerved, and its influence upon his action was manifested in every stage of the proceedings which he was called upon to control.

It is by no means as simple a task to follow the career of Paul Kruger or to arrive at a conclusion as to his character which would command anything like universal assent. A life of the ex-President was published in the year 1897 by Mr. Fisher Unwin. Unfortunately, the author of it was Mr. F. Reginald Statham, whose claims to confidence either in matters of fact or of judgment have been destroyed by his own confessions. It is sufficient to say that the biography itself was written to order. All, therefore, that can be safely taken from Mr. Statham's biography consists of facts which

[1] At the time of writing, March, 1902, there seems little prospect of the realization of this hope. The more tabernacles, the more cant.

can be verified by other and more responsible authorities. Amongst these admitted facts the pedigree of the ex-President may probably be regarded as authentic.

The first of the South African Krugers[1] of this branch was one Jacob Kruger, who migrated to South Africa in the service of the Dutch East India Company in the year 1713. South Africa is the land of large families, and that of Kruger was no exception. Jacob Kruger was blessed with seven children, the sixth of whom, Hendrik, the fourth son, was the ancestor of the ex-President. He married a Cloete, by whom he had eighteen children. Of these eighteen Johannes Jacob begat Hendrik and five others. Hendrik was the father of Caspar Jan Hendrik and six other children, of whom Caspar Jan Hendrik the third, being born in 1796, was married to a Steyn, and became the father of Stephanus Johannes Paulus, who was born on October 10, 1825. It is not so strange as it might appear that the ex-Presidents of the South African Republic and of the Orange Free State should have been connected by marriage, since it would be difficult to find amongst the Boers of South Africa any two persons, taken haphazard, whose pedigree, if worked out, would not betray kinship. A fanciful writer might weave a little romance round the name of Stephanus, for which there is most probably not the slightest foundation. The name first appears in the family in the third generation of Krugers, and was borne by one Stephanus Johannes, the grandson of the founder of the family, the date of whose birth was 1778. Now, in the account of a journey in South Africa undertaken in 1801 by Mr. Truter, a Cape Dutchman, at the instance of Lieutenant-General Dundas, which is appended to Barrow's 'Voyage to Cochin China,' we come across the name of Kruger:[2]

A Dutch Boer of the name of Kruger also joined the expedition at this place (the banks of the Orange River). He had been pointed out to them as a man of great resources and likely to be of use. At an early period of his life his brother and himself, having exercised their ingenuity in forging the paper currency of the colony, were banished for life to Robben Island, in the mouth of Table Bay; but before they had remained

[1] 'Paul Krüger,' p. 26. Mr. Statham asserts that 'no less than five families or individuals of this name found a home under the Southern Cross.'

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 383.

long they contrived, by means of a boat made of dried skins, to escape to the continent and to fly into the country of the Booshuanas, where the elder brother was trodden to death by an elephant, and the present man had been living among the savages on the skirts of the colony, an outlaw and a vagabond, for nearly twenty years. Informed of his situation, the party had carried with them a conditional pardon from the Court of Justice at the Cape, to which his long-sufferings and his willing services on the present occasion amply entitled him.

A little later on, in his history of the expedition which had been joined by the twenty-year outlaw Kruger, Mr. Truter gives[1] an account of a certain freebooter of the name of Africaaner, who, he tells us,

had lately enlisted into his gang a number of vagabonds of various descriptions, who had found the means of escaping out of the hands of justice from the different parts of the colony. To this desperate gang of robbers had recently been added a person of so extraordinary a character that a sketch of his history may not be uninteresting. The name of this man was Stephanus, by birth a Pole, but of Greek extraction. From the ranks in some of the German hired regiments in which he completed the time of his enlistment he had procured a situation in the Cape as an assistant to a shopkeeper, where he was tempted to exercise his ingenuity in forging the paper currency of the Government, the accomplishing of which required no moderate share of skill. . . . At last, however, the forgery was detected. Stephanus was tried for his life, condemned, and cast into solitary imprisonment till the day of his execution should arrive. In this deplorable situation his genius, however, did not forsake him. By the help of a rusty nail which he found in the wall and a little deal table, on which he mounted, he worked out gradually a square hole through a three-inch plank of teak wood, which, with a little plaster, was the only cover to the room, and through this hole he effected his escape. In order to elude the suspicion of his keeper, it was supposed that he swallowed every morning the dust of the wood which he worked out in the course of the night, and filled up the holes in the plank with crumbs of bread. Having passed the limits of the colony without being detected, or at least molested, he came to the establishment of Kitcherer[2] on the Sack River; and having made out some plausible story of an irresistible call of grace by which he was impelled to preach the Gospel among the heathen, he was received with open arms by this worthy but credulous missionary, who, however, as appears by his own statement, had soon sufficient reason to repent of his misplaced hospitality. The Greek, it seems, conceived the horrid design of murdering his host for the sake of his little property, and for this purpose had one night stolen into his chamber, and was approaching his bed, when the missionary, being fortunately awake and not without some suspicion of the ill intentions of his guest, instantly sprung upon him in the dark, reproached him for his ingratitude, and with true Christian fortitude and forgiveness sent him away unhurt, when at a single word his faithful followers would have torn him in pieces. He furnished him with meat and tobacco for the journey, a flint and steel to strike a fire, a little gunpowder, and a Bible, the perusal of which he strongly recommended to his serious attention. But the good intentions of the missionary were

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 423.
[2] An excellent Dutch missionary whom even Dr. Theal applauds.

strangely perverted by this vagabond, whose character was not less remarkable for its depravity than ingenuity. He read the Bible, it would seem, but the information he obtained therein was employed for no good purpose. On his arrival among the Koras he announced himself as a prophet, assuring them that he had been sent many thousand miles to promote their future consolation and happiness. He built a temple under the edge of a thick grove of mimosa, erected an altar on which he encouraged these silly people to make their offerings, selected from the best of their flocks and herds. With solemn mummery he burned part of the victim and appropriated the rest to himself; sometimes taking advantage of a thunderstorm or of the overflowing of the river, he was more exorbitant in his demands, and even found it expedient to require the young damsels to be brought to the temple. He carried this religious mockery still farther. At a little distance behind the wood there was a mountain of a considerable height, which this high-priest of his own constituted religion regularly ascended every morning quite alone, on the summit of which he was generally seen wrapped in a volume of smoke, occasioned by his setting fire to the dry grass or making a blaze with gunpowder. He ascended this mountain, as he pretended to the ignorant Hottentots, in order to receive his instructions from Heaven; but the real fact was that, independent of the view he had of imposing on the simple Koras, he marched to the summit of this hill, commanding an extensive view over the plains to the southward, to ascertain whether the officers of justice were in pursuit of him, an event of which the appearance of waggons at a distance would have given him timely notice to effect his escape.

These impious proceedings being at length communicated to the missionaries of the Gospel, they resolved, if possible, to seize the culprit, and to deliver him into the hands of justice. But this sly impostor, being apprised of their design, abandoned his temple and his flock, and fled towards the western coast of the continent, where, on the confines of the colony, he was recognised by a Dutch Boer, and taken prisoner, to whom, indeed, he pretended to surrender himself as being desirous to give himself up at the Cape. The Boer allowed him to sleep in his own waggon, whose kindness he one night repaid by cutting the throat of his host with a razor, and stole away to the lower part of the Orange River, where he joined the noted marauder Africaaner.[1]

Mr. Truter, with the sententiousness of a pious traveller, thus comments on the case:

Thus, in all probability, had not the zeal and the exertions of the missionaries defeated his purpose, would this impious wretch have succeeded in establishing a new and motley religion, partly Hebrew and partly Greek, at the head of which, as the *pater deorum*, the name of Stephanus might in after-ages have been rendered eminent among the ignorant Hottentots; and to what learned speculations on the origin of the society might not the future history of so heterogeneous a mixture of religions have given rise? Such is the danger of being led astray to which the unthinking multitude of all nations is exposed, if once they forsake the customs and opinions of their forefathers, and commit themselves to the impostures of artful and designing men.

Unfortunately, we learn no more from Mr. Truter about

[1] Africaaner was ultimately converted.

either of the ex-forgers, Kruger or Stephanus. But there is nothing in the dates inconsistent with a connection between the first appearance of the name of Stephanus in the pedigree of the Krugers and the career of the Greco-Pole, who turned his knowledge of the Bible to such unexpected but not profitless use.

In this connection it is not uninteresting to read the comment of so interested a partisan as Mr. Statham on the character of Paul Kruger:

> It would be impossible (he says)[1] to make a correct estimate of Paul Kruger's character without according due importance to the strong religious feeling by which it is penetrated. That this religious feeling takes a shape which was better known in the England of a century ago—the England of the Methodist revival—than in the England of to-day detracts nothing from its value. If Paul Kruger regards himself as specially guided and protected by a supernatural Power, the very same thing is to be said of John Newton, the friend of Cowper, who, beginning his career as the captain of a slaver, ended it as the venerated Rector of one of England's most noted churches. . . . A time came, when he was about twenty-five years of age, when the strength of his inward conflict—the conflict of newly-aroused religious sensibilities—with the instincts and impulses of a young man possessed of no ordinary vital force, literally drove him into the wilderness, where he disappeared for some little time, returning thence a man of deep and earnest religious convictions. . . . It does not always happen that an evident earnestness in respect of religious matters is associated with sincerity or ability in politics. Nevertheless, in Mr. Gladstone the people of Great Britain have before them an example which may help them to acquire a warmer appreciation of Paul Kruger.[2]

There is no question which has more troubled the mind and perplexed the judgment of historians than the nature of the relations between strong spiritual convictions and the moral character. It is, of course, easy to say off-hand that a man whose conduct in private life, in business, or in politics, is inconsistent with his religious professions is necessarily a hypocrite; but the daily experience of most men will convince them that this generalization is altogether unwarranted. So good a man as Faraday, when asked how he reconciled his unfettered and daring spirit of scientific research with his unqualified acceptation of the dogmas of religion, said: 'When I leave my laboratory I

[1] 'Paul Kruger,' p. 39.

[2] Modesty alone prevented Mr. Statham from adding himself as another example of a different kind.

lock the door behind me.' When Charles Kingsley was approached by a young clergyman troubled by doubts, the only remedy which Kingsley could suggest was sufficient hard work to give him no time for idle speculations. If the worst charges that his bitterest enemies have made or invented to the detriment of Cromwell were proved up to the hilt, I should not be the least convinced that his religious utterances were the premeditated outcome of deliberate hypocrisy; and I am equally disposed to admit that Louis XV., infamous as in most respects he was, was not consciously insincere when he interrupted his debauches to observe the ordinances of his Church. The discrepancy between religious convictions and moral practice are too familiar to us all to be denied, and are too mysterious to be explained by the assumption that they result from a calculated effort to deceive. That Paul Kruger really believed that the race to which he belonged was the chosen people, appointed by the Creator of the world to carry out a predestined design in South Africa, I do not doubt. A similar belief was entertained by most of the races of the world in the century to which the Boers properly belong. An illustration of this belief, which is current among the Boers to this day, may be found in a paragraph in Truter's account of his expedition, which I have recently quoted, and which met my eye as I was turning over the pages to verify the quotation.

> Such an opinion (he says, speaking of the belief in Europe in 1800 that slavery was a natural institution) in justification of a crime against humanity is just on a level with that of a Dutch Boer who told Governor Jansen, on remonstrating with him on his cruelty towards the Hottentots, that there could be no harm in maltreating those heathens, as the women evidently carried about with them the mark which God set upon Cain.[1]

One of the earliest records we have of Kruger's participation in public life was in connection with the destruction of Makapan's people in revenge for a massacre by that chief of the entire families of Willem Prinsloo and Jan Olivier—in all, twelve persons: M. A. Venter and his son, W. Venter, H. Potgieter, and eight other white people[2]—which occurred towards the close of 1855. The atrocity was a brutal one,

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 405.

[2] Theal's History, 1854—1872, p. 29.

but the vengeance taken was at least as inhuman. Makapan's people had been driven to a cavern some 2,000 feet in length by 400 or 500 feet in width, in which at least 2,000 of the clan had taken shelter. It will be better, perhaps, to give the terrible sequel in Dr. Theal's words:

> It was then determined to blockade the place, so that no one could get out, and wait the results of famine. On the 6th of November the two Commandants-General were standing close to each other in front of the cavern, when a musket-ball struck Mr. Potgieter in the right shoulder, and, passing through his neck, killed him instantly. The mouth of the cavern was then partly blocked with brushwood and stones, and a strong guard was set over it; the remainder of the force was sent out, under Mr. Paul Kruger, and other able officers, to scour the surrounding country. The inmates of the cavern soon felt the want of water, and many of them tried to make their way out at night, but were shot down in the attempt. It was a cruel deed that was being performed, but the burghers were determined to make a terrible example of Makapan's people. The blockade lasted twenty-five days. Then a party of the besiegers entered the cavern, and met with so little resistance that they took complete possession, with only four men slightly wounded. They found passages leading from the Great Hall, and running away under the mountain to unknown distances; but the terrible stench, and the difficulty of exploring, with the dim lights that they carried, prevented them from proceeding far. Mr. Pretorius estimated that 900 persons had been killed outside the cavern, and more than double that number had perished of thirst within it. Makapan's clan was almost annihilated.[1]

The next appearance of Mr. Kruger was in connection with one of those internal disputes between the Boers themselves which had never ceased since the Great Trek. The split arose out of Church questions, and the strife began at a Church meeting at Rustenburg, at which it was resolved—

> That no religious community other than the Dutch Reformed Church should be tolerated or allowed to build places of worship within the Republic; that the Church of the Republic should be independent of the Synod of the Cape Colony; and that every male over twenty years of age and every female over sixteen should pay three shillings yearly towards its support.

Mr. Kruger, as a Dopper, was in favour of the less Liberal party. The result of prolonged agitation was the establishment of rival Governments at Potchefstroom, Lydenburg, and Zoutpansburg. In the course of the tangled disputes that followed, the party of Mr. Pretorius, representing the Transvaal, came into collision with the Orange Free State, and Mr. Kruger was appointed Commandant under Pretorius,

[1] Theal's History, 1854—1872, p. 30.

who had committed the unforgivable crime, from the Boer point of view, of having invited Moshesh to take part against the Orange Free State. In 1861 Mr. Kruger was a prominent figure in a revolution which had convulsed the South African Republic for many months. Says Dr. Theal:

There were two acting Presidents and two rival Governments in the South African Republic. At length Commandant Paul Kruger resolved to put an end to this anarchy. The Volksraad had appointed Theunis Snyman, of Pretoria, Commandant-General, but this officer volunteered to serve under Kruger, so also did Joseph Van Dyk, Commandant-General of Lydenburg. Having driven Schoeman (the acting President) and his adherents from Pretoria on the 7th of October, Commandant Kruger, with a force of between 800 and 1,000 men and three pieces of artillery, invested Potchefstroom. Schoeman held the village with between 300 and 400 men and one cannon. . . . On the 9th Schoeman, who was not wanting in courage, made a sudden sortie in hope of capturing Kruger's artillery. Instead of this, however, he was driven back with the loss of his own cannon, and with one man killed and himself and seven others wounded. . . . On the 10th of October Commandant Kruger took possession of Potchefstroom. The Council of War issued a proclamation banishing Stephanus Schoeman and the Landdrost Steyn from the South African Republic, and Schoeman's principal adherents were fined, Jan Koch, among others, being sentenced to confiscation of all his property. Kruger, then, with his whole force marched to Klip River, where it was reported that Schoeman was collecting his adherents again. He left Potchefstroom unprotected. Upon this Schoeman fairly doubled upon his opponent, for he returned to Potchefstroom and took possession of the village. Some 800 men rallied round him there. Kruger hastened back, and the two Commandoes were ready to fall upon each other when President Pretorius interposed.[1]

Pretorius, it should be remarked, had resigned the thorny presidentship of the South African Republic, and accepted that of the Orange Free State. A sort of compromise was patched up on conditions which included the appointment of a special court for the trial of all criminal charges connected with the disturbances.

On the 12th of January, 1863 (says Dr. Theal), the Special Court should have opened its session at Pretoria. Instead of that, however, Schoeman with an armed force entrenched himself in the village, and declared that he would not submit to its decisions, as its members were his opponents. Kruger then, with a few burghers of his own district, marched to protect the court. He formed a camp at a little distance from Pretoria, and called upon the burghers everywhere throughout the Republic to join him and establish order. His appeal was responded to, and from all sides men gathered to his standard. Taking only two

[1] Theal's History, 1854—1872, p. 136.

unarmed burghers with him, he entered Pretoria and announced that he did not wish to shed a drop of blood, but that he was determined to compel all persons to submit to the law. At this Schoeman's adherents began to waver, and they offered no resistance when Kruger placed a strong guard over the public offices. On the 19th of January, during a heavy thunderstorm, Schoeman and his principal adherents fled from Pretoria, taking two cannon with them, and as soon as possible they crossed into the Free State.[1]

Almost immediately afterwards another insurrection arose out of the election of the President, and, as was usual in the South African Republic, there were many recriminations and charges of tampering with the ballot-papers on both sides. The result was declared a victory for Mr. Van Rensburg by a very narrow majority over Mr. M. W. Pretorius. Again I will let Dr. Theal tell the story:

Commandant Jan Viljoen and the Marikwa raised the standard of revolt on this occasion. On the 10th of December, 1863, he entered Potchefstroom at the head of an armed force, dismissed the officials, and replaced them by others of his own selection. His force termed itself Volksleger, the army of the people. Commandant-General Kruger called out 150 men to suppress the rebellion, not knowing that Viljoen's force was as strong as it was afterwards found to be. With this little commando, called the Staatsleger, or army of the State, he proceeded to Potchefstroom and encamped outside the village. Then for the first time he became aware of the numbers against him. There were 300 men in Potchefstroom, and Viljoen with a still stronger force appeared in the rear and cut off his retreat. Kruger then sent to Viljoen to propose that they two, and two others selected from each side, should go through the Republic, call a meeting at each centre of population, and hold another election for the President, and bind themselves to abide by the issue. This proposal was rejected; a patrol from the State army was surrounded and obliged to surrender, when Kruger, seeing the hopelessness of his position, retired across the Vaal, taking with him only an officer named Carel Eloff. Some of his own men managed to disperse in different directions, but most of them were obliged to surrender.[2]

Another indecisive action took place, followed by another reconciliation, but the result may be given in Dr. Theal's words:

The civil strife was over, but the injury it had caused could not easily be repaired. The Treasury was empty, salaries were in arrears, taxes of all kinds were outstanding and practically irrecoverable. But this was the smallest claim in the account—the Republic had lost the confidence of the outside world; no one any longer believed in its stability. The Orange Free State, once so desirous for union, now preferred to stand alone, even in the dark shadow of the Basuto power. The most that its citizens spoke of was an offensive and defensive alliance between the two

[1] Theal's History, 1854—1872, p. 138. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

Republics, but when it was submitted to their vote in 1892, they took very little interest in it. In their eyes, order north of the Vaal seemed to have perished.[1]

In 1867 Mr. Kruger is again conspicuous in a difficulty which reflected small credit on the Republic and its prospects of maintaining order within its boundaries. The Zoutspansburg district was in a continual state of anarchy owing to the ill-treatment of the natives by white men of the roughest and most lawless character, most of whom were citizens of the Republic. Again I will quote from Dr. Theal:

November, 1865, President Pretorius and Commandant-General Kruger visited Zoutspansberg, and endeavoured to restore concord without having recourse to arms. . . . Upon investigation they ascertained that the conduct of the lawless Europeans on the border could not be justified, but they had no means of punishing the guilty persons. There was no police force whatever, and no money to pay one. The President and the Commandant-General did their utmost to persuade all parties—white and black—to resume friendly intercourse, and having done this, they returned to the seat of Government. . . . On the 19th of February, 1866, the Volksraad met in session at Potchefstroom. It resolved to send a commission of inquiry to the seat of disturbance to enforce order by means of a commando, and by the same means to support the courts of law in punishing wrong-doers there, but the financial condition of the country was such that these resolutions could not be carried into effect. . . . In June the Government called out a commando of 1,200 men, but did not succeed in obtaining even half that number. The Commandant-General was ill and unable to lead the force, but the President went with it. It accomplished nothing whatever, and was disbanded within a month. In the early months of 1867 . . . the President called out a commando of 2,000 men to assemble at the end of May, and summoned the Volksraad to meet in extraordinary session. The members came together on the 15th of May. The President in his opening address informed them that he was helpless for want of money. Twelve thousand pounds in notes issued in 1886 had been insufficient to do more than pay the most pressing debts, and the old mandates were still unredeemed. During the session of twelve days the Volksraad could devise nothing better than another issue of notes secured by public lands to the amount of £20,000, to redeem the mandates and meet the expenses of the commando. In such pecuniary distress was the Republic at the time that a large quantity of ammunition, brought from Europe in 1856 by Mr. McCorkordale and delivered at the port of Durban by arrangement with the Government in part payment of the land sold to him, could not be brought from the sea-coast to Pretoria for want of money to meet transport charges. Instead of 2,000 men answering the call to arms, only 500 mustered on the day appointed, and with this small force, ill supplied with material of war, Commandant-General Kruger marched to Zoutspansberg. . . . At the same time that an armed force was called out, the court of three combined Landdrosts was directed to punish European wrong-doers in the district

[1] Theal's History, 1854—1879, p. 143.

of Zoutspansberg. Before this court Commandant Stephanus Venter and Field-Cornet J. H. Du Plessis were charged with seizing cattle belonging to Captain Pago in April, 1865, and illegally detaining them. On the 27th of June the jury found the accused persons guilty, and the court proceeded to sentence them. Du Plessis was ordered to restore 300 head of cattle to the people of Pago and to pay a fine of £500. As soon as the sentence was pronounced there was a disturbance in the court-room; an unruly mob took possession of the place and set the Landdrost at defiance, and rescued the men who had been found guilty. When this lawless proceeding was reported to Commandant-General Kruger, he abandoned all hope of restoring order, and, acting by resolution of the Council of War, he withdrew from Schoemansdal. . . . The abandonment of Schoemansdal, and with it a considerable portion of the district of Zoutspansberg, was regarded by President Pretorius as the greatest disaster that the Republic had ever sustained.[1]

I have quoted largely from these episodes in the history of the South African Republic prior to the annexation because they supply proofs that Mr. Kruger was well aware of the elements of dissolution which existed in the Transvaal and which ultimately produced the anarchy and chaos which justified the action by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. As a matter of fact, the factions into which the Transvaal was divided in the year 1877, and of one of which Mr. Kruger was a prominent leader, precipitated the annexation, as I have shown in a previous chapter.

It is one of the peculiarities of Dr. Theal's historical methods that, unless he has some very distinct object to serve, he rarely supplies the data for forming a judgment on the incident he chronicles. It would puzzle any expert to pronounce a confident verdict from the given facts upon the merits or demerits of the part played by Mr. Kruger in the many turbulent episodes of his eventful and chequered life. But one fact stands out clearly from the bare summary of events furnished by Dr. Theal, viz., that Mr. Kruger, when he protested against the annexation of the Transvaal by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, was well aware from personal experience of the anarchy, chaos, and bankruptcy which were the normal condition of the South African Republic during the greater part of its existence. Yet he always strenuously denied that the country was incapable of managing its own affairs. He concealed from those whose sympathies he enlisted in England the records of his own troubled political career.

[1] Theal's History, 1854—1872, p. 217.

Indeed, in the arts of deceit he was a typical Boer.[1] He attempted to delude Sir Bartle Frere on the occasion of their first meeting with a numerously-signed protest against annexation which had really been obtained for quite a different purpose. He left the High Commissioner with the impression that his own resistance to annexation was merely a formal remonstrance adopted to pacify the more ignorant and restless of his fellow-Boers. The impression thus made was strengthened by his acceptance and retention of a paid official post under the Government against which he was conspiring.

I have noticed in a previous chapter the sordid attempt of Mr. Kruger to extort from the Treasury a larger salary than that to which he was entitled. It was not a very pleasing trait in his character which induced him to profess the highest personal esteem for Sir Bartle Frere while he was conspiring with Mr. Courtney and other politicians in England to secure his downfall, over which, when it was accomplished, he boasted as if it were his own act. During the whole course of his relations with Great Britain, we find always the same recourse to the arts of chicane and intrigue, the employment of which never troubled his conscience. I am far from saying that, judged by the standards recognised by his own people, President Kruger was dishonest. I have pointed out elsewhere, and on many occasions, that 'slimness,' which implies qualities not appreciated by Englishmen, is held to be a virtue by the Boers. But whatever allowances we may make for the natural instincts and training of President Kruger, it is quite obvious that he is in every respect the moral antithesis of the man against whom he was now to be pitted. Mr. J. A. Buttery vouches for a story which I have heard myself repeated by men in whose presence Mr. Kruger has uttered it.

For a thorough comprehension (says Mr. Buttery) of Oom Paul's mind at this time, a recapitulation of the story of Kruger's maimed

[1] It is an excessive compliment perhaps to compare Mr. Kruger with the Emperor Severus as portrayed by Gibbon ('Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' vol. i., p. 150). 'He promised only to betray; he flattered only to ruin, and, however he might occasionally bind himself by oaths and treaties, his conscience, obsequious to his interest, always released him from the inconvenient obligation.'

thumb may be pardoned, particularly as some doubt has been thrown on its authenticity, and the present writer can adduce his personal testimony to its accuracy. The old President was fond of dwelling on the topic, and his description of his dealings with Her Majesty's High Commissioners is in thorough keeping with his peculiar methods of illustration. With an indescribable look of cunning and triumph on his heavy features, he would intently regard the hand with the maimed thumb (injured by a rifle accident in youth), and with the forefinger of the other slowly tick off the sound digits with a running commentary something as follows:

'First there was Bartle Frere' ('Bottel Ferreira' he called him)—'he went down' (the finger went down, too, as he spoke); 'then there was Hercules Robinson—he went, too' (the second finger followed suit); 'then there was Sir Henry Loch' (the third finger would disappear in the hollow of his hand); 'then Hercules Robinson tried again—he's gone;' then, peering at the maimed stump, and playfully trying to depress it, he would say, 'And now there's this Miller' (that's as near as he ever got to the pronunciation of the present High Commissioner's name)—'I can't make him out.' Kruger would shake his head, refill his pipe, and lapse into a brown study. Evidently this Miller was an unknown quantity, and puzzled the old man exceedingly.[1]

Had Lord Milner been as wily and full of ruses as the President himself—and as, according to Mr. John Morley in his speech in Manchester, March 13, 1902, he should have been—he could not have puzzled and bewildered the Dutch with whom he was brought into contact more than he actually did by his absolute straightforwardness and transparent honesty. The ordinary Dutchman is incapable of believing that anyone with whom he deals has laid all his cards upon the table. His own consciousness assures him that the rules of the game demand that some cards at least should be kept in reserve up the sleeve or elsewhere. He does not believe it possible that in any of the dealings of life a man should speak without *arrière-pensée* or mental reservation of some kind. From the very first, therefore, they suspected that behind the blunt candour of the High Commissioner lurked some dark and deep meaning which was not disclosed. Lord Milner would probably be the first to confess that the bewilderment was not always on one side. If the Dutchmen were at a loss to understand a statesman who always said what he meant and meant what he said, the High Commissioner was equally puzzled by the atmosphere of almost unconscious duplicity in which

[1] 'Why Kruger made War,' p. 37.

he lived. Amongst his admirable staff there was none who had more experience of the guile displayed by the childlike and bland Dutchmen in the game 'they did not understand.' They could tell many a good story, if they would, of the simplicity into which they walked into traps set for them by open-faced, unsophisticated-looking Boers, who would look them straight between the eyes—and lie.

It takes a considerable time even for the shrewdest and most intelligent Englishman to adapt his understanding to an atmosphere of perpetual and even meaningless falsehood. Yet such is the moral atmosphere of Dutch South Africa, and even the British Afrikander of the second and third generation is not immune from its influence.

There is a little story which I am fond of telling when I wish to convey to people at home some idea of the nature of what may be called this moral mirage. It has nothing to do with politics, and is therefore the more characteristic. Some four or five years ago the question of repaving the capital was under the consideration of the municipality of Cape Town. The younger brother of one of the most influential of Dutch politicians was owner of some house property in a street which badly required repairing. He was naturally anxious that the district in which he was interested should be benefited by the improving zeal of the corporation. Intrinsically there was everything to be said for the gratification of his desire. He brought a letter to an English friend of mine whose veracity is beyond question. In this letter, which was addressed to one of the Cape papers and was signed with a pseudonym, he set forth the claims of the district in which he was interested to participate in the scheme of repavement. My English friend, recognising that the letter was admirably written and conclusive in its argument, asked the Dutchman who had written it, to which he replied, without hesitation, 'My brother,' giving the name of the distinguished Dutch politician. He added, 'I am just going to have the letter typewritten, and send it off to the *Argus*.' 'Why have it typewritten?' asked my friend. 'It is very clearly written, and on one side of the paper only. Why not send it as it is?' 'Oh,' was the reply, 'my brother told

me to have it typewritten, because, if he were charged with having written it, he could truthfully say he had not.'

It seems ludicrous to an Englishman that anyone should take the trouble to deceive himself by so puerile a device. Yet it is characteristic of the daily habits of all classes of Dutchmen.

I could multiply almost infinitely instances of a similar kind which came under my own observation during my six months' sojourn in Cape Town. Even when I had grown inured to a practice which is as unintelligible as repugnant to most Englishmen, I never overcame my amazement at the reckless indifference to truth displayed in the Cape Parliament. It was part of my duty to sit out many debates in the Assembly, as it had been my duty for some years to occupy a seat in the gallery of the House of Commons on important occasions. It would be absurd to deny that I have heard members of Parliament making assertions which, to my own knowledge, were not in accord with the truth; but at least on the comparatively rare occasions when a member of the House of Commons has been convicted of saying that which is not, and of saying it deliberately, he is covered with shame, and is conscious that he has, at least for the time, forfeited the esteem of his fellow-members. In the Cape Assembly, on the other hand, as far as one could gather from any outward manifestation, no disgrace of any kind attached to the utterance of the most wilful falsehood. Over and over again I have heard members state, in their places in the Assembly, not only that which they knew to be false, but that which they were well aware every single member who was listening to them knew that the speaker knew was false. More often than not a lie of the most flagrant character passed unchallenged. It was too common an occurrence to demand notice, and still less to provoke a scene. If the member guilty of such deliberate perversion of the truth were corrected by an opponent, an approving smile was the only manifestation by which he recognised his detection. It will be readily admitted that in an atmosphere such as this it is impossible for the most wary always to avoid being the victims of this moral mirage. The readers of Daudet's

'Tartarin' will remember that the author attributes to *le soleil* the picturesque self-delusion, only partly conscious, of the delightful inhabitants of Tarascon. Sometimes on the Karoo I have been tempted to adopt a similar explanation for the habitual unveracity of the Afrikander. Oftentimes I have seen mirages of trees and water where I knew perfectly well neither trees nor water could be found. Yet as I gazed upon the mirage, knowing exactly what it was, I could rarely resist the temptation of believing that, after all, that which I saw was real, and that the knowledge which pronounced it an illusion of the eyes was mistaken. It is not, therefore, surprising that many excellent persons who have visited South Africa with a predisposition to see things, as it were, through a Dutch medium should have convinced themselves that the mirage represented the political landscape as it actually lay before them.

I do not think that Lord Milner would deny that in the earlier days of his high commissionership he was an occasional victim. I can bear emphatic personal testimony to the fact that he started upon his mission without any predisposition to believe otherwise than well of the character of the Dutch portion of his South African fellow-subjects. Intimate as our relations had been for a great number of years, he always brushed aside, on the many occasions between his appointment and his departure on which we met, any attempt on my part to impress him with my views of the South African problem. 'I am going out,' he used to say, 'with a perfectly open mind; I mean to learn Dutch, and I shall not attempt to formulate, still less to express, a definite opinion upon the problem until I have had at least twelve months' experience of South Africa.' It was very nearly twelve months before either in speech or despatch he committed himself to any definite expression of opinion. It was on March 28, 1897, that the memorable banquet to which I have already referred was given to Lord Milner on the eve of his departure for South Africa, and it was on March 3, 1898, that he delivered the speech at Graaf Reinet which proved that he had grasped the essential factors of the problem which he had to solve.

I believe that up to the date of his appointment he had not

followed the South African Question more closely than any other man with keen Imperial instincts and a wide knowledge of affairs would naturally have done. The speech at the send-off banquet itself shows with what an open mind he was viewing his new duties. It was, I think, this extraordinary power of detaching himself from his natural surroundings, and of studying a problem from a most unbiassed standpoint, which accounted for the extraordinary confidence which he inspired in all men who enjoyed intimacy with him. In the course of my life I have been brought into more or less close contact with a number of persons entitled to the description of eminent and interesting, but I have never met with one who so unmistakably and so promptly impressed those about him with supreme confidence in his judgment and his impartiality. His detachedness, to use an uncouth but convenient phrase, was by no means attributable to conceit or to a belief in the infallibility of his own opinions. I often wondered before my last visit to Cape Town, and I marvelled the more there, at the gladness with which he suffered fools. He was always more of a listener than a talker, and he would give ear to the stupidest and most tiresome, equally with their opposites, in the hope of understanding all possible points of view of a case. It was not merely the attention of courtesy which he extended to those who hardly seemed to deserve it, but the intense desire to see things with eyes of different focal strength; and it came to pass, therefore, that it was almost twelve months to the day between the period of the conversation to which I have referred, and the first occasion upon which he made a public speech of anything but the usual conventional character. He would not himself, I imagine, deny that he was at first taken in by the Dutch colonists. It would have been surprising had it been otherwise. In the first place, the natural dignity and courtesy of the Dutchman, which are amongst his most pleasing characteristics, naturally impress those brought into contact with him with an idea of his consideration and respect, and the impression produced by the natural attributes of the Dutchman is deepened by his prodigious capacity for artifice. I have dwelt elsewhere upon the deficiency of any elementary appreciation of truth

which marks the Dutch character. It was partly a yet imperfect understanding of the Dutch character which accounts for Lord Milner's despatch on the occasion of the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in the Cape, wherein he bore tribute to Dutch loyalty to the person of the Sovereign, a tribute of which so much ridiculous use has been made by Lord Milner's assailants.

His critics do not appear to realize that the recognition of Dutch loyalty, to which they attach so magnified an importance, is the completest refutation of the malignant charge that Lord Milner went out as a ready tool to carry out Mr. Chamberlain's alleged nefarious design of setting race against race in South Africa. The instrument of so infamous a policy would hardly have started on his unclean work by openly eulogizing the loyal allegiance of the Dutch colonists whom he was to traduce and alienate. I have said that this despatch was partly due to a misunderstanding of the Dutch character, a misunderstanding which was quite pardonable in a man who had only resided in the country a month or two. But this official representation of Dutch loyalty was only in part due to this cause. In the main it was quite accurate and justified by circumstances. It was perfectly true (and it is even true to-day) that the Dutch colonists and the burghers of the Orange Free State did hold the character and person of Queen Victoria in affection and esteem. There is no doubt that during the many years in which the Dutch were aspiring, if not conspiring, to get rid of the Imperial factor altogether, there were but an infinitesimal minority who would have gladly destroyed the link which made them in name subjects of the Queen.

This despatch of Lord Milner's bearing testimony to the Dutch devotion to the Queen disposes, as I have said, of one of the two conspiracies conjured up by pro-Boer imagination. Alongside of that refutation should be read the often-quoted words of Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons a year before Lord Milner's appointment, in which he said:

> A war in South Africa would be one of the most serious wars that could possibly be waged. It would be in the nature of a civil war. It would be a long war, a bitter war and a costly war, and, as I have pointed

out already, it would leave behind it the impress of a strife which, I believe, generations would hardly be long enough to extinguish.

When Lord Milner landed in South Africa, the situation was much the same as it had been for many years, with one important exception. The spirit of Afrikanderism had not altered, but those into whom it had entered and whose soul it had possessed believed that the time had come when the mask of a spurious loyalty could be safely thrown aside. Sooner or later in any circumstance this abandonment of a transparent disguise must have occurred. The most extreme members of the Afrikander Bond were convinced that the psychological moment had arrived with the Raid. The humiliation which that deplorable incident had inflicted upon the English people and the colonists of English blood, who were in no way responsible for it, and the excessive self-abasement which was manifested in word and deed by so many excellent persons in the colony and at home, further persuaded the champions of Afrikanderdom to unmask the batteries which had been so long in position.

Two instances may be cited in support of this conclusion:

Shortly after the Raid there occurred a presidential election in the Orange Free State, the candidates in which were Messrs. M. T. Steyn and J. G. Fraser. The latter had received his political education in the school of Sir John Brand, whose policy, as I have shown, started from the postulate that the independence of the Orange Free State, which he had done much to redeem from bankruptcy and anarchy, was based upon the maintenance of a benevolent neutrality towards the Transvaal on the one side and the Imperial Government on the other. He had the sagacity to realize that the very isolation of the Orange Free State was the surest guarantee of its independence. By sitting still and committing himself to neither party, President Brand secured for himself and for his country a position of unique advantage. He foresaw that the struggle between the Transvaal and Great Britain for supremacy in South Africa must ensue in some form or other, and he knew what the inevitable result would be. If war broke out and the Orange Free State held aloof, there would be two alternatives equally

satisfactory at the disposal of the Republic at the close of the conflict. Either the independence of the Orange Free State would be strengthened and rendered permanently inviolable, or if it were thought to be in the interests of the Republic to enter a federation of South Africa under British protection, the Orange Free State could come into such a union on terms of its own choosing. On the other hand, in the extremely improbable event of the triumph of the Transvaal over Great Britain, the position of the Orange Free State would be neither better nor worse than it was before the outbreak of hostilities. To few communities has the opportunity been given of standing to win on either issue of a game such as was being played in South Africa. The only condition of success was that of sitting still and doing nothing. Theoretically, it is the easiest and most comfortable thing imaginable; in practice it is very rarely adopted. President Brand, however, adhered to this policy to the end of his life, and secured for it the support of a large majority of his fellow-citizens. In pursuance of it he had discouraged the establishment of the Afrikander Bond in the Republic, and had stoutly resisted all overtures made by Mr. Kruger for an offensive and defensive alliance with the South African Republic. It was as a disciple of Sir John Brand and as an apostle of his political gospel that Mr. J. G. Fraser became a candidate for the presidency. His opponent, Mr. Steyn, represented the school of politics which Sir John Brand had stubbornly combated throughout his life. He was amongst the founders of the Afrikander Bond. He had eagerly imbibed the doctrines of Borckenhagen, whose influence over Mr. Steyn and Mr. Reitz is as much responsible for the war in South Africa as any single factor can be. It is not without its special significance that when Bloemfontein was occupied by the British troops a Dutch pamphlet issued in Holland of remarkable import was found amongst the most private papers of ex-President Steyn. It was issued in 1882 or 1883, and was annotated throughout with notes in Mr. Steyn's handwriting. The pamphlet was written with considerable ability, and its object was to secure a solution of the South African problem in a manner most advantageous to Holland. The writer, after

dwelling upon the past glories of the Netherlands and the lost commercial supremacy of the Dutch, attributed the present subordinate position of the Netherlands to their want of profitable colonies and their forfeiture of the command of the seas. He asked himself if, and how, and where, it would be possible to revive the pristine glory of his country, and he found an acceptable answer in South Africa. The drift of his argument is to show the incalculable advantage that might accrue to Holland if the mother-country were in the same relation to Dutch settlers in South Africa as Great Britain to the North American colonists before the War of Independence. He compares the resources of South Africa to those of America, and maintains that the former power and prestige of Holland can be restored by the establishment of the most intimate relations between the kingdom of Holland and a united Dutch South African Republic. The essential preliminary, he asserted, to such a union must be the extirpation of British influence upon the soil of South Africa. He dwells upon the steps necessary to secure this consummation in much the same language as was used by the founders of the Afrikander Bond and by Carl Borckenhagen in the columns of the *Bloemfontein Express*. It is quite likely that the ultimate goals of Mr. Hofmeyr, the 'boss' of the Afrikander Bond, and that of the supporters of the policy advocated in this pamphlet, were not the same; but they were set in the same direction, and for nine-tenths of the distance to be covered before either was attained the course to be travelled was on the same road. The situation is not badly summed up in a little book written by Mr. C. H. Thomas, of Belfast, Transvaal, who was for many years a burgher of the Orange Free State. Mr. Thomas was a member of the Brand party, and as such a sturdy supporter of Mr. Fraser in his rivalry with Mr. Steyn.

The Hollander coterie (says he[1]) may plead patriotism which pointed to the duty of using the tempting opportunity presented in South Africa in saving Holland from national submersion and political extinction by means of the Boer nation, but against this stand the unparalleled vileness of expedients and the treacherous deception employed to attain that object. It involved the wholesale seduction of one section of that nation into sedition and rebellion against a most beneficent and just Government,

[1] 'The Origin of the Anglo-Boer War Revealed,' p. 157.

under which they prospered and enjoyed the highest conceivable degree of liberty, and even special privileges, and of pitting the other section into hostility and war against a Power which meant nothing else than peace and amity towards them, thus placing both in a position of risk to forfeit all their prosperity, apart from the inevitable horrors of a war evoked by their rapacious and murderous Hollander malice.[1]

The Bond scientists in Holland had fully persevered in their craftily-laid programme. After having succeeded in producing race hatred between Boer and English, the next step had been to convince the Boer leaders and the people of the inevitableness of a contest for insuring the supremacy of the Afrikanders, coupled with the absolute necessity of the complete expulsion of the entire British element. As arguments were adduced that the British element had proved itself unassimilable and irreconcilable, its retention in South Africa would necessitate continuous provision to keep it in a state of subjection. The existence of such conditions would be inconsistent and incompatible with true ideal liberty as intended for the whole of South Africa, and which must be linked with all-round equality and fraternity. The presence of a British factor would be an unsurmountable bar to that consummation, hence the necessity of its total removal.

The Bond leaders are the next in guilt. With these the incentive is principally ambition, which by degrees became misshaped into a specious patriotism. It is known how a heartily-desired object, if pursued for a long period, is apt to so monopolize and infatuate the mind as to totally vitiate and pervert the sense of discernment between right and wrong, both as to the legitimacy of the object and the means to be employed in its attainment. As the realization remains deferred and the efforts are increased, the object, from being considered legitimate, is by degrees invested with merit, a halo of virtue is added to the aspect, its pursuit is viewed as a duty, by fair or by questionable means, the end justifying the latter. All, it is said, is fair in love and warfare. This diagnosis appears particularly applicable to President Kruger and State Secretary F. W. Reitz, both men of sincere piety (perhaps also to Mr. Schreiner), who would have abandoned their project and renounced and repudiated the Afrikander Bond if ever they had doubted its legitimacy of principle. So also would most of the other Boer leaders, and their clergy, too. The agencies must have been exceedingly subtle to operate such processes of reasoning, such deception and aberration in honest-minded and even godly persons. As to the bulk of the Boer people, they are simply led by their chiefs and superiors, in whom they repose unquestioning confidence. They go unreasoningly with the stream of opinion under the firm belief that all is Divinely sanctioned, including rebellion and violence, and blindly obey their call, considering their cause analogous to that of the Jews of old, who were enjoined to spoil the Egyptians, and then to pass over and conquer their land of promise.

No Papal Bull of indulgence ever freed people's consciences more than the Boer people now feel in regard to the warfare in which they are engaged.

I do not feel constrained to defend the style of this language, the style being, as Buffon remarked, *de l'homme*

[1] It will be noticed that, like all Afrikander politicians on one side or the other, Mr. Thomas is not too nice in his use of the language he employs to denounce his opponents.

même,[1] though both style and language are characteristic of Afrikander methods of controversy. The facts set forth can be substantiated in an almost infinite variety of ways. Mr. Steyn, who was the embodiment of the sentiments thus denounced by Mr. Thomas, secured an easy victory over Mr. Fraser, the political heir of Sir John Brand. Simultaneously with the victory of Afrikanderdom in the Orange Free State came the abandonment of all disguise by the organ of the Afrikander Bond in Cape Colony, which was owned and controlled by Mr. Hofmeyr. The Raid operated on the minds of the leaders of the Bond much as his rejection by Oxford University influenced Mr. Gladstone. In a famous speech, in which he wooed the suffrages of the electors of South-west Lancashire, Mr. Gladstone assured them that he 'came amongst them unmuzzled.' His political connection with Oxford University had acted upon him as a curb in the same way as the alliance between Mr. Rhodes and the Afrikander Bond had kept in check the tendencies of the latter. *Ons Land* took advantage of its emancipation by indulgence in language the significance of which it is impossible to deny. Shortly after the Raid it published an article, already quoted, in which it stated:

> Afrikanderdom has awakened to a sense of earnestness and consciousness which we had not observed since the heroic war for liberty in 1881. . . . The flaccid and cowardly Imperialism that had already begun to dilute and weaken our national blood gradually turned aside before the new current which permeated our people. . . . Now or never the foundation of a wide-embracing nationalism must be laid. . . . Let us now lay the foundation-stone of a real united South Africa on the soil of a *pure* and all-comprehensive national sentiment.

In the course of another article, which was reproduced by *South Africa* in its issue of October 15, 1898, and which is stated to have appeared some months earlier, the following sentiments are expressed:

> When one considers the state of affairs in the Cape Colony, it must be confessed the future does not appear too rosy. The majority of the Afrikander nation in the Cape Colony still go bent under the English yoke. The free section of the two Republics is very small compared to that portion subject to the stranger, and whatever may be our private

[1] These, by the way, are Buffon's own words, and not the nonsense generally attributed to him, viz., that '*Le style est l'homme même.*'

opinion, one thing at least is certain, namely, that without the assistance of the Cape Colonial Afrikanders the Afrikander cause is lost. The two Republics by themselves, surrounded as they are by the stranger, are unable to continue the fight. One day the question of who is to be master will have to be referred to the arbitrament of the sword, and then the verdict will depend upon the Cape Colonial Afrikanders. If they give evidence on our side we should win. It does not help a brass farthing to mince matters. This is the real point at issue, and in this light ever Afrikanders must learn to see it, and what assistance can we expect from Afrikanders in the Cape Colony? . . . The vast majority of these are still faithful, and will even gird on the sword when God's time comes.[1]

Though the Bond itself had by this time thrown off all disguise, it is difficult to believe that Mr. Schreiner, who ultimately became the leader of the Bond party, though not himself a Bondsman, could have had any clear apprehension of the goal to which his patrons were making. I sketched Mr. Schreiner's character in the February number of the *Fortnightly Review* in the year 1900, and I see no reason to qualify in any respect, favourably or unfavourably, the sketch from life for which I, so to speak, had sittings in the latter half of the year 1900.[2]

Nor is it possible to believe that Mr. Merriman, who wrote the famous letters 1898-99, could at that time have conceived the possibility of co-operating with others of his subsequent colleagues who were in hearty sympathy with Messrs. Kruger and Steyn. The position of Mr. (now Sir Richard) Solomon was different. He was not, of course, at any time in sympathy with the real objects of the Bond as they were afterwards avowed, or even with most of the programme on which they appealed to the electors. Practically, however, there were only two possible parties in Cape Colony—that which acknowledged the general authority of the Afrikander Bond, and that which, calling itself progressive, was admittedly led and managed by Mr. Rhodes. Nothing could have been more unfortunate than this distribution of forces at that particular juncture of affairs. There were independents, men of high character and standing, who looked upon Mr. (now Sir James) Rose-Innes as their leader, who, eschewing the Bond and all its works and aspirations, refused to follow the lead of Mr. Rhodes. Un-

[1] 'The South African Conspiracy,' p. 44.
[2] The article appeared over the pseudonym Geoffrey C. Noel.

fortunately, there was not room in South Africa for a third party. The dividing line between the Afrikander Bond and the loyalists was so sharply defined that there was no place for those graduated tints by which in the spectroscope of politics one hue is imperceptibly merged into another. Those who were not in favour of the maintenance of the British connection were against it. That this was not apparent to a large number of moderate men was an unfortunate factor in the problem. On the one hand was an absolutely united Afrikander party, insidiously attracting to itself a few men of standing and reputation, whose adhesion gave that party a reputation for loyalty which it certainly did not deserve. On the other hand, the English party was hopelessly divided against itself. Mr. Rhodes was the acknowledged master of the loyal organization known as the South African League, and Mr. Rhodes was at the time of Lord Milner's arrival in Cape Colony an object of suspicion to moderate men on two very different grounds. I have in a previous chapter endeavoured to explain the nature and reputation of Mr. Rhodes' relations with Mr. Hofmeyr's organization. It is a somewhat singular fact that one of the chief reasons which Mr. Rhodes gave me for his compact with the Afrikander Bond was the hopelessness of uniting the English party on any reasonable policy, though he was destined to divide that party more than any of his predecessors. Sir Gordon Sprigg, of whom I also published a sketch in the *Fortnightly Review*, was the nominal leader of the party; but of Sir Gordon it might be said, as Mr. Parnell once observed of Mr. Justin MacCarthy, that he was 'a nice old gentleman for a quiet tea-party.' He commanded, as he deserved, respect for his personal qualities. He was, however, in no sense a born leader of men, and was singularly devoid of all those qualities which a crisis such as that which was imminent in South Africa called for. No man came nearer to being the embodiment of the weakness expressed in the line 'Propter vitam vitia perdere causas.' To save his political life he was capable of as nearly committing suicide as it is possible to do. The men of undoubted capacity, of perspicuous strength of character, and of unspotted reputation who at that time

should have been found fighting in the foremost ranks of the English party were absent when the battle was joined. Sir James Rose-Innes stood in splendid isolation, a bitter antagonist of the objects and methods of the Afrikander Bond, and so distrustful of Mr. Rhodes that he refused to serve under his banner. Sir Richard Solomon carried his antipathy to Mr. Rhodes a step further. So essential did he believe it to be to the interests of South Africa as a whole that Mr. Rhodes should be permanently banished from political life that he joined, at least temporarily, the ranks of those who, while they were sworn enemies of Mr. Rhodes, were still more bitter foes of Great Britain. In such circumstances there could be no unity of purpose, no real concerted action on the part of the British section of the population in the constitutional struggle which was now inevitable. On the other side there was a perfectly organized party with objects long since clearly defined, and concealed from no one but their opponents, subsidized, as there can be no moral doubt they were, out of the bloated secret service funds of the Transvaal. Perhaps it would be difficult to give a better idea of the nature of these objects than is contained in a circular issued by Mr. B. J. Viljoen and distributed broadcast through the colony a fortnight before the declaration of war. The following are the most striking passages. It was headed:

APPEAL TO AFRIKANDERS.

Compatriots on either side of the Orange River (says Mr. Viljoen), at this significant period in our nation's history I come to you as an old colonial Afrikander and ask you to consider and decide what you propose to do in the uncertain and pregnant future. You have seen that Great Britain's ancient hatred and avarice have driven us so far that, if we are able to believe her, our little Republic is on the threshold of a sanguinary and unjustifiable war.

Hundreds of arguments are advanced by England, but who amongst us does not know that the only reason that would inspire England to war would be the fear that

BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY

in South Africa is threatened by the victory of the Afrikander Bond in Cape Colony, and that when the two Boer Republics are once brought under British control the Afrikander element in the Cape Colony will be made to disappear?

The franchise is mentioned in England's latest despatches as the point of dispute; but look at the case in its true colours, and the question

involuntarily occurs to every human being, What right has England to make demands with respect to a purely internal question, and dare England declare war upon it? England has just as much right to do this as I have to take or claim Sir Alfred Milner's watch. But history has demonstrated to the full that England is never very seriously disposed to establish a real *casus belli* for any war. Remember the frivolous charge upon which our countrymen were

MURDERED AT SLACHTER'S NEK.

In the presence of their wives and children they were undeservedly hanged by the neck;[1] and even when eternity refused to receive their innocent souls, and the gallows broke, the supplications of the wives, the children, and the relatives were made to deaf ears. For the second time the five Boers were drafted to the gallows in a most cruel manner.

In what an unjust manner Natal was taken from our nation after we had paid for it with so much blood and tears, and in the same manner the diamond-fields, which were stolen from the Orange Free State in an even more shameless way! The persecution of our people dates from before 1834, and look how God snatched us as if by miracles from the claws of mighty England in 1881. What happened to the great Rhodes and his 800 freebooters in 1896? Although Providence placed them quickly in our hands, it did not occur without five innocent Boers being sacrificed. The nineteenth century is almost at an end, but English persecution ceases not. It desires

TO AVENGE AMAJUBA

and to destroy the Afrikander nation. England's iron yoke is getting heavier and more insufferable. We have conceded and surrendered, but, alas! we have reached the utmost limit, and if we have to abandon more of our rights we are surely committing national suicide, for peace without honour would have an irremediable if not demoralizing effect upon our national character.

If we concede the five years demanded by England without the guarantee that England will not again interfere in our internal affairs, and will not attempt to foist

A NON-EXISTENT OVERLORDSHIP

upon us, as happened with the Cape Boy Question, the Coolie Question, the Edgar case, and in many other connections, then, alas! the sacrifice is committed, and we wound our national character in such a manner that our national character can never be healed or restored as long as the world goes round.

If the South African Republic and the Orange Free State no longer exist as Afrikander Republics, the lives of the Afrikanders elsewhere will be rendered intolerable. That is as certain as the sun shines in the heavens.

Owing to the existence of the two independent Afrikander Republics, the Afrikander in the English colonies is still recognised and tolerated, but if the Republics fall into the hands of England, the Boers of the Cape Colony and Natal

WILL SURELY BE DISARMED,

and one humiliation will follow quickly upon the heels of the other.

[1] *Cf.* p. 10.

Hottentots will not alone go with you to the polling-booths and vote with you and ride first-class with you, but they will sit with you, if not over you, in the Parliaments; in short, the word 'Afrikander' will disappear from the history and vocabulary of South Africa. The honourable place hitherto taken in South Africa's history will be assumed by lords, dukes, colonels, and other played-out scoundrels and black filth ('Uitgespeel de schurken em zwartgoed'). Our posterity will be

GOVERNED AND OPPRESSED

by menials, and our children, like the Irish, will only dare notify their origin in fear and trembling.

Wherefore, men of our race that live under the British flag, know and understand full well that the destruction of the Boer Republics means the destruction of the Afrikander nation. If the Republics go under, the Afrikander will merely be referred to as a nation that once existed. Know that in that event England's iron yoke will press upon and plague you till the last day. Wherefore I ask, Will you allow England to employ your colony, your money, your cattle—yea, even yourselves—to destroy your brothers and compatriots?

THE TWO AFRIKANDER REPUBLICS

have been driven by Great Britain like the old people of Israel to the Red Sea, and our liberation and redemption lies in the hands of God. We trust in God. He extricated our fathers from many serious dangers, and can, and will probably, do so again. But, Afrikanders, to your own selves be true, be true to your people, and we can safely leave the issue in God's hands.

(Signed) B. J. VILJOEN.[1]

Such utterances as these were naturally only issued from the safe side of the Orange or Vaal Rivers, but addresses of this kind are not circulated until the minds of the recipients have already been prepared for their acceptance. The earlier part of this work has been devoted to a revelation of the means by which the policy of 'Africa for the Afrikanders' was inculcated with remarkable tenacity during many years. If we want an illustration of the way in which the soil was prepared for the reception of such seed as was scattered by Mr. Viljoen in the address I have quoted, we have only to turn to the magazine published in the seminary of the Dutch Reformed Church. In the early months of the year 1899 we find in the *Studenten Blad* of the theological seminary at Burghersdorp some specimens of the training which the Afrikander youths destined for the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church received in politics:[2]

[1] Blue-Book, pp. 102, 103.

[2] These extracts are taken from Mr. F. W. Bell's 'The South African Conspiracy,' Appendix H, p. 190.

The fact cannot be disputed that we all as students are striving to be true patriots—that is, patriots of the Afrikander nationality. Without boasting we can point to—

(*a*) Our general attitude towards the English. Although residing amongst them, we form a separate circle, and are quite satisfied with our own society ('met ousselven').

(*b*) Our hearty participation in the brilliant victory of our Bonds-party in the Parliament and at elections. We are nearly all registered voters, and certainly do something for our Bond interests.

(*c*) Our warm interest in the present questions concerning the Transvaal and Free State, the much-desired union, Afrikander University, for both Chamberlain's impudent protest, etc. These are the subjects of our daily conversations. Many of our actions prove this, that we desire to be members ('Leden') of a people that is not English. . . . Take one proof—the taal. Without hesitation it must be admitted that if one wishes to remain an Afrikander he must use his own vehicle of thought. 'But we certainly speak Afrikaansch.' Oh yes! but what a sad state of affairs do we find! It is hard to confess, but we are allowed too much liberty ('Wen al te vrijen voet'). We are cosmopolitan with regard to the English and Dutch Afrikaansch language. We agree heartily with the petitions for less English in the Transvaal. 'If our taal loses ground we are lost.' But is not our daily language a strong proof of the decline of our mother-tongue because we are so fond of English ('de rooitaal')? We are all guilty. For example, if we speak of one of small courage we call him a 'coward,' instead of using our own and more expressive term 'lafaard.' We say 'change' for 'kleingeld,' etc., etc.

Another student takes for his theme 'The English.'

Must we love this people (he asks), who robbed our ancestors of their freedom, who forced them to leave a land dear to them as their hearts' blood, a people that followed our fathers to the new fatherland which they had bought with their blood and snatched from the barbarians, and again threaten their freedom? Our fathers fought with the courage of despair, and retook the land with God's aid and with their blood. But England is not satisfied. Again is our freedom threatened by the same people, and not only our freedom, but our language, our nationality, our religion. Must we surrender everything and disown our fathers? I cannot agree with this. The thought is hateful to me—the thought of trampling on the bodies of our fathers as we extend the hand of friendship to those who have slain our fathers in an unrighteous quarrel. But some may say that the Bible teaches us to love our enemies. I think, however, that the text cannot be here applied. Race hatred is something quite distinct from personal enmity. When I meet an Englishman as a private individual I must regard him as my fellow-creature; if, however, I meet him as an Englishman, then I, as an Afrikander, must regard him as the enemy of my nation and my religion, as a wolf that is endeavouring to creep into the fold. This is the chief reason why we must regard them as our enemies—they are the enemies of our religion. I think I can with truth add that race hatred was encouraged amongst the children of Israel, if not, indeed, commanded. Afrikanders, let us take heed that we are not deceived. The English will be our oppressors, but never our friends. Let us take heed for our freedom, our nationality, and let us fight for our religion.

And the third letter in the same issue is a description of the Queen's Birthday sports at Burghersdorp:

Most of our students were there. This was certainly not out of a sense of loyalty, but rather, I think, of curiosity. . . . The worst of the affair was that at the conclusion of the sports three cheers for the Queen were called for. Where were the students then? I turned and ran; my throat would not budge.

The significance of this spirit as manifested before the outbreak of the war will be better realized if we remember that the sanction of the clerical authorities was necessary before such opinions could find expression in magazines of this kind. And that this sanction was readily granted may be gathered from the report of a meeting held at Burghersdorp about this time. The Rev. Louis Petrus Vorster, the Reform pastor at Burghersdorp, spoke out without much disguise upon the differences between the Transvaal and the Imperial Governments.

He did not agree (he said), with Mr. Joubert[1] that the Transvaal might extend the franchise, for those who cried out for it did not really want what they asked for. They only wanted more grievances to embroil the Transvaal in war. This was what they of the colony must protest against, for, as subjects of the British Empire, they were responsible for her (*sic*) acts. If an injustice were done to the Transvaal or Free State they would be as guilty as England. He thought the Conference[2] a great mistake. The Transvaal knew what to do without advice, and England's aim was merely to hamper and hem in the Transvaal. He was weary of England's threats of war against the Transvaal. He did not believe England dared to make war, for she had not men enough to conquer the Transvaal. It might be a bloody war, it might last for years, but the Transvaal and Free State could raise 80,000 men, and to conquer these England would need a force of 150,000 men. Where would she get ships enough to convey such an army, where horses and provisions? Certainly not in the colony, for even if they remained neutral here they would not sell their horses and forage to England, and so help in the war against their brothers. England's threat was only a threat, the talk of a man with an unloaded gun. 'One hundred Transvaalers would shoot one thousand Englishmen dead' (loud applause). 'All their Maxims would not take the Transvaal.'[3]

[1] This Mr. Joubert was a member of the Legislative Assembly.

[2] The Bloemfontein Conference.

[3] It must be to this pastor that my ever-to-be-lamented friend George Steevens referred in an interview which is published in the only fragments we possess of his South African experience. Writing from Burghersdorp on October 14, 1899, Mr. Steevens says ('From Cape Town to Ladysmith,' p. 22):

'At this moment Burghersdorp is outbonding the Bond; the reverend gentleman who edits its Dutch paper and dictates its Dutch policy sluices out weekly vials of wrath upon Hofmeyr and Schreiner for machinating to keep patriotic Afrikanders off the oppressing Briton's throat.

'I went to see this reverend pastor, who is professor of a school of Dopper

At this same meeting Mr. Van der Walt, a Transvaal burgher, told those present that

> it did him good to see such a meeting of Afrikanders on British soil. If war should come, the Transvaal would be quite able to defend itself. He prayed the Almighty that the day would come when the whole of Afrikanderdom would be freed from the foreign yoke.

This statement was greeted with loud and prolonged applause, and the resolution was put, which stated *inter alia:*

> We are convinced that if no change is made in the policy pursued in later years by the Imperial Government towards the South African Republic, this will inevitably have a disastrous effect in South Africa and on the British Empire.

We are told that the resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously, every person in the room, with the exception of the reporter, rising and cheering. It was resolved that the result of the gathering should be wired to

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theology. He was short, but thickset, with a short but shaggy gray beard; in deference to his calling, he wore a collar over his gray flannel shirt, but no tie. Nevertheless, he turned out a very charming, courteous old gentleman, well informed, and his political bias was mellowed with an irresistible sense of humour. He took his own side strongly, and allowed that it was most proper for a Briton to be equally strong on his own. And this is more or less what he said:

'"Information? No, I shall not give you any; you are the enemy, you see. Ha, ha! They call me rebel, but I ask you, my friend, is it natural that I—Hollander born, Dutch Afrikander since '60—should be as loyal to the British Government as a Britisher should be? No, I say; one can be loyal only to one's own country. I am law-abiding subject of the Queen, and that is all that they can ask of me. . . .

'"I look on this war as the sequel of 1881. I have told them all these years it is not finish. War must come. Mr. Gladstone, whom I look on as greatest British statesman, did wrong in 1881. If he had kept promises, or given back country before the war, we would have been grateful; but he only give it after war, and we were not grateful. And English did not feel that they were generous, only giving independence after war, though they had a large army in Natal; they have always wished to recommence. . . .

'"Well, well, it was the law of South Africa that the Boer drive the native north, and the English drive the Boer north. But now the Boer can go north no more; two things stop him—the tsetse-fly and the fever. So if he must perish, it is his duty—yes, I, minister, say it is his duty—to perish fighting.

'"But here in the colony we have no race hatred. Not between man and man; but when many men get together there is race hatred. If we fight here on this border, it is civil war; the same Dutch and English are across the Orange as here in Albert. My son is on commando in Free State; the other day he ride thirteen hours, and have no food for two days. I say to him: 'You are Free State burgher; you have the benefit of the country; your wife is Boer girl; it is your duty to fight for it.' I am law-abiding British subject, but I hope my son will not be hurt. You, sir, I wish you good luck—good luck for yourself and your corresponding. Not for your side—that I cannot wish you."'

the *Express*, *Ons Land*, the *South African News*, *Rand Post*, and *Volksstem*, and this official report states that the proceedings throughout were most harmonious, and all allusions to the Transvaal, England's disastrous policy or her military weakness, were heartily applauded. This treasonable language is in keeping with the bombastic appeal made on the eve of the war by Mr. Reitz, the State Secretary of the South African Republic, to Afrikanders throughout the country, a translation of which, under the title 'A Century of Wrong,' we owe to the patriotism of Mr. W. T. Stead. I have referred to this pamphlet before, and here I need only quote the introduction and the prologue. It opens thus:

BROTHER AFRIKANDERS,

Once more in the annals of our bloodstained history has the day dawned when we are forced to grasp our weapons in order to resume the struggle for liberty and existence, entrusting our national cause to that Providence which has guided our people throughout South Africa in such a miraculous manner.

The struggle of now nearly a century, which began when a foreign rule was forced upon the people of the Cape of Good Hope, hastens to an end; we are approaching the last act in that great drama which is so momentous for all South Africa; we have reached the stage when it will be decided whether the sacrifices which both our fathers and we ourselves have made in the cause of freedom have been offered in vain; whether the blood of our race, with which every part of South Africa has been, as it were, consecrated, has been shed in vain; and whether, by the grace of God, the last stone will now be built into the edifice, which our fathers began with so much toil and so much sorrow.

The hour has struck which will decide whether South Africa, in jealously guarding its liberty, will enter upon a new phase of its history, or whether our existence as a people will come to an end; whether we shall be exterminated in the deadly struggle for that liberty which we have prized above all earthly treasure; and whether South Africa will be dominated by capitalists without conscience, acting in the name and under the protection of an unjust and hated Government seven thousand miles away from here.

So much for the prologue; and this is the epilogue:

The orchids of Birmingham are yellow, the traditions of the greatest people on earth are tarnished and have become yellow. The laurels which Britannia's legions hope to win in South Africa are sere and yellow, but the sky which stretches its banner over South Africa remains blue. The justice to which Piet Retief appeals when our fathers said farewell to the Cape Colony, and to which Joachim Prinsloo called aloud in the Volksraad of Natal when it was annexed by England, the justice to which the burghers of the Transvaal entrusted their case at Paarde Kraal in 1880, remains immutable, and is like a rock against which the yeasty billows of British diplomacy dissolve in foam. It proceeds according to eternal laws unmoved by human pride and ambition. As the

Greek poet of old said, 'It permits the tyrant in his boundless self-esteem to climb higher and higher, and to gain greater honour and might until he arrives at the appointed height, and then falls down into the infinite depths.'

Afrikanders, I ask you but to do as Leonidas did with his 300 men when they advanced unflinchingly at Thermopylæ against Xerxes and his myriads,[1] and not to be disturbed by such men as Milner, Rhodes, and Chamberlain, or even by the British Empire itself. But cling fast to the God of our forefathers and to the righteousness which is sometimes slow in acting, but which never slumbers nor forgets. Our forefathers did not pale before the terrors of the Spanish Inquisition, but entered upon the great struggle for freedom and right against even the mighty Philip, unmindful of the consequences.

Nor could the rack and the persecuting bands of Louis XIV. tame or subdue the spirit of our fathers. Neither Alva nor Richelieu[2] was able to compass the triumph of tyranny over the innate sentiment of freedom and independence in our forefathers, nor will a Chamberlain be more fortunate in effecting the triumph of capitalism, with its lust for power, over us.

If it is ordained that we, insignificant as we are, should be the first among all peoples to begin the struggle against the new-world tyranny of capitalism, then we are ready to do so, even if that tyranny is reinforced by the power of Jingoism. May the hope which glowed in our hearts during 1880, and which buoyed us up during that struggle, burn on steadily. May it prove a beacon of light in our path, invincibly moving onward through blood and through tears, until it leads us to a real reunion of South Africa.

As in 1880, we now submit our cause with perfect confidence to the whole world. Whether the result be victory or death, liberty will assuredly rise in South Africa like the sun from out the mists of morning, just as freedom dawned over the United States of America a little more than a century ago. Then from the Zambesi to Simons Bay it will be

AFRICA FOR THE AFRIKANDER.

It would be the easiest task in the world to multiply examples of the doctrines which were instilled into the minds of the rising generation of Afrikanders in the British colonies. If it be objected that the instances I have just quoted are taken from a period posterior to the Bond victory at the polls, I reply, as everyone familiar with South African politics would reply, that this was the natural outcome of Dutch political tactics. To have spoken as freely upon its ultimate goal before the appeal to the electors, as the Afrikander Bond dared to do when victory was assured, would have alienated thousands of Dutchmen who were hesitating between loyalty and disaffection; but the moment

[1] If Mr. Reitz had known his Greek history better, he might have rendered service to his countrymen by advising them to do as Leonidas actually did—to sit tight until they were actually attacked. An 'unflinching advance' at Thermopylæ would have had as disastrous results as the invasion of Natal and Cape Colony.

[2] Richelieu, by the way, was a Duplessis.

their triumph was secured the leading spirits of the Afrikander Bond unmasked their batteries.

I have anticipated somewhat the proper course of my narrative in order to show what was the real policy of the one political combination which was really organized and united when Lord Milner arrived in South Africa. Against it, as we have seen, was arrayed an imperfectly organized League, which did not command the confidence of some of the best adherents of the British connection in the colony. It is said, of course, and doubtless with truth, that the South African League, having Mr. Rhodes as its chief, did not lack the means to carry on its campaign. Neither, on the other hand, was the Afrikander Bond cramped by a depleted treasury. Mr. J. H. Buttery, whose book 'Why Kruger made War' has hardly received the attention it deserves, gives us some very interesting information on this subject. Mr. Buttery was a journalist, whose reputation in South Africa stands very high, and he had exceptional opportunities for studying the inwardness of the Afrikander position from Johannesburg, as he was for two years the chief sub-editor of the semi-official *Standard and Diggers' News*, which was largely subsidized by the oligarchy at Pretoria. Speaking of the result of the Cape General Election in 1898, Mr. Buttery says:

> The Progressives made no secret of the fact that their campaign-chest was largely augmented from Rhodesian sources; but from whence did the Bond obtain their sinews of war? There was no central fund frankly admitted, as in the case of England, by both the great political parties. The leaders of the Bond were men of position, but certainly not in the financial sense; while as for the rank and file, contributions from them to the party exchequer were out of the question. Where, then, ask the South African Imperialists, does the money come from?
>
> Certain it is that for the first time in its history the Bond knew what it was to have unlimited financial backing. In all the contested elections of importance gold was flung about with reckless prodigality. Had Mr. Hofmeyr stumbled on a diamond-mine or prospected a new and fabulously rich gold-reef? Men whose shoes a few weeks before were worn down to the uppers, and who lounged about Pretoria and Johannesburg, suddenly blossomed out into Bond candidates of irreproachable get-up and an apparently unlimited supply of the wherewithal with which to prosecute their campaign. Mr. Stiglingh, a Rand auctioneer, was financed directly from Pretoria to fight Mr. Rhodes at Barkly West. The ex-Premier suspected, though he could not prove, the source from whence his opponent obtained the sinews of war. When war broke out, Stiglingh practically admitted that he was in the pay of Pretoria and turned rebel.[1]

[1] 'Why Kruger made War,' p. 88.

CHAPTER X

THE BEGINNING OF THE STRUGGLE

LORD MILNER, as I have said, had expressed to me on the eve of his departure from England that he should not form, and still less give utterance to, a definite opinion upon the South African Problem until he had devoted twelve months to its study upon the spot. The time had just about expired when he delivered the famous speech at Graaf Reinet, which may be taken as one of the landmarks in the history of our relations with South Africa. Before I deal with the speech, it may be as well that I should briefly recapitulate the situation.

The preceding chapters of this book have been written in vain if it has not been demonstrated that the centre of political gravity in South Africa was to be found—as it is still to be found—in the Cape Colony. The disregard of this cardinal fact is at the bottom of much of the misconception which has prevailed with regard to the whole problem. The startling revelation of the almost fabulous wealth of the Rand, the attraction of thousands of gold-seekers to the Transvaal, the influence which the vast financial operations of capitalists of all nationalities exercised upon Stock-Exchanges and Bourses throughout the civilized world, the constant friction between the Imperial Government and the narrow oligarchy which ruled at Pretoria, the tragi-comedy of the Jameson Raid, the famous German telegram which threatened to convulse European relations—all these and a host of minor incidents concentrated public attention upon the Transvaal, to the exclusion of the other States and colonies which made up what we know as South Africa. Yet it is the bare truth to state that had the Cape Colony been inhabited

mostly by English settlers, or had the men of British stock stood in the same relation to their fellow-subjects of alien descent as they did in Natal, neither the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand nor any of the complications which ensued would have arrested the peaceful development of that great sub-continent. It is inconceivable that an isolated community, surrounded on every side by British colonists, animated by the sentiments of kinship which prevail elsewhere throughout the Empire, would ever have dreamt of treating a Uitlander population, consisting mainly of Englishmen, as the South African Republic treated the wealth-makers of Johannesburg. The root-cause of all the trouble which has occurred was the existence of a population, in a British colony bordering upon the two Republics, which, though outwardly loyal, had never dismissed and but rarely disguised their determination to found an independent and united South Africa.

I have traced in the preceding chapters the development of that aspiration, which had its origin at least as far back in history as the year 1834—the year, that is, of the Great Trek. For nearly half a century these aspirations had been, so to speak, in a fluid state. They were crystallized by the events which occurred between 1877 and 1881, and took definite form in the creation of the Afrikander Bond. It is an error to suppose, however, because this earnest craving for independence remained dormant between 1834 and 1877, that it slept the sleep from which there is no awakening. On the contrary, the Dutch colonists in South Africa during that period did not consider themselves bound by overt action to promote an end to which they believed the Imperial Government was itself tending. I have shown that there was good reason for this belief, and, indeed, that it was impossible for an Afrikander to entertain any other. In State documents, in public speeches, and in political action, Minister after Minister had laid down the proposition that South Africa with the exception of the harbours of the Cape Peninsula was an unremunerative and costly burden to the Empire. The Dutch thought that the trunk of the Empire would shed the Afrikander branch and allow it to take root and develop as best it might. It was in this belief that the majority of the Dutch inhabi-

tants opposed the grant of responsible government. They feared that it might in some mysterious way strengthen the bonds with Great Britain which were decaying by natural causes. When they found a few years later that a new spirit had risen, or an old spirit had revived, in the hearts of the British people, and that there was a deep-seated determination to strengthen the ties between the mother-country and its dependencies, they realized that their belief had not been ill-founded. With characteristic slimness they recognised that the very instrument that had been invoked to strengthen the union between Great Britain and South Africa might be used to destroy it. They had resented the grant of responsible government. They now organized themselves with a view to converting responsible government into a stepping-stone for complete independence. There has been inconsistency without end in the treatment of the South African Problem, but infirmity of purpose and recurrent vacillation have always been on the side of Downing Street. The Dutch have changed their methods of attack, but they have never lost sight of their objective. The support given by the Afrikanders to the Transvaal rebellion of 1880-81 was dictated by a clear apprehension of the fact that another colony ruled by English ideas, if not by English officials, would be fatal to the realization of the dream of a United South Africa from the Zambesi to Cape Agulhas. They could not foresee that the time was coming when the poor relation whose cause they espoused in their own interests would become the multi-millionaire, whose wealth would contribute to the gratification of their ambition. To Mr. Rhodes must be given the credit of having been the first fully to grasp the situation, though Sir Bartle Frere apprehended it before him, and had warned successive Secretaries of State of the formidable crisis which was rapidly maturing. Mr. Rhodes, as we have seen, was convinced very early in his political career that, if British supremacy was to be retained unimpaired in South Africa, that result must be achieved either by the co-operation of the Dutch inhabitants of Cape Colony or by the employment of the strong arm of Great Britain. The events of 1881 seemed to prove to demonstration that, so far at least as South Africa was concerned, the strong arm was palsied

and impotent. He tried, therefore, the other alternative. No one can say, with such experience of the development of the British Empire before him as was then available, that the policy of Mr. Rhodes was either wrong in principle or unpromising in practice. In spite of the success which seemed to crown the earlier stages of this policy, it failed simply because the Dutch never abandoned the goal for which they were making, and Mr. Rhodes could not tread the same path. Temperament, training, ideals, and experience, all contributed to induce Lord Milner to adopt the same principles, though not the same methods of application, which had recommended themselves to Mr. Rhodes. He started, that is to say, on his official career with the sound and healthy conviction that the maintenance of British supremacy in South Africa could be best effected by loyal co-operation on the part of the Dutch inhabitants. Every true and enlightened Englishman in such a position would naturally have arrived at the same conclusion. It fitted in with all our best traditions, it was consonant with the spirit of our race, and it had succeeded elsewhere when intelligently applied. What, however, soon became apparent to Lord Milner was that the assumption which underlay the application of this principle was non-existent.

'He who wishes the end,' says the French proverb, 'wishes also the means to that end.' The question of means is absolutely pointless if there is no desire for the end. And for the end which Lord Milner so earnestly desired there was no wish at all on the part of the Dutch population. They had a goal in view, but it was the very antipodes of that sought by Lord Milner. Yet he never abandoned the policy of conciliation until conciliation was flung back, almost contemptuously, in his face. There was, of course, a wide difference between the methods adopted by Lord Milner and those which had been pursued by Mr. Rhodes before the Raid. The differences were as much due to the dissimilar characters of the men as to the different positions they occupied. Mr. Rhodes suffered during the whole of his political career from his acceptance of the principle of a great English Minister that 'every man has his price.' Lord Milner, on the other hand, was satisfied that men and parties

were to be convinced, but not to be bought. The Prime Minister of a self-governed colony has it in his power to purchase the support of any party on whose aid he relies. In this respect his position is neither better nor worse than that of the British statesman. A party system depends in the long-run upon the relative attractiveness of the proposals which the leaders of the respective parties submit to the country for approval. Mr. Rhodes, in order to secure Dutch support for a policy which extended far beyond the limits of the colony, adopted the domestic programme of the Afrikander Bond. If there was political immorality in this course of action, it was immorality of a kind which is inseparable from the operation of the party system. It succeeded so long as the Afrikander party saw in its adoption no obstacle to their ultimate goal. It broke down the moment the parting of the ways was reached, and it was realized by the leaders of the Afrikander Bond that Mr. Rhodes' ambition and theirs were hopelessly irreconcilable. Lord Milner, if he had the wish—which he certainly had not—never possessed the means of buying the support of any party in South Africa. He could demonstrate to all classes, as was his manifest duty as High Commissioner, that the peace and prosperity of South Africa depended not necessarily upon the amalgamation of all the States and colonies under a homogeneous constitution, but upon a unity of political ideals on all of the grave problems which confronted the million or so of white dwellers in the subcontinent. He could preach to them, as he did, that the principle of British supremacy was one which lay outside discussion, and which no British Minister or his representative could allow to be challenged. He could demonstrate to them, as he did, not only with his lips but in his life, that the most vigilant defence of British supremacy was consistent with the most sensitive regard for Dutch susceptibilities and even for Dutch prejudices. There will not be found in a single despatch or speech of Lord Milner's before or even after the rupture of relations between the Empire and the Republics a word of contempt for, or antagonism to, any Dutch ideal except that of the extirpation of British authority. He recognised, and, so far from censuring, he sympathized

with, the ties which kinship, common language, common traditions, and common religion had established between the dwellers south of the Orange and Vaal Rivers and those who had settled on the other side. So far from deprecating this natural sympathy, he endeavoured to work upon it to induce the Dutch subjects of the Queen to bring their brethren in the Transvaal into line with their own political methods and sentiments. Had he desired the extinction of the two Republics he would never have encouraged the Dutch colonists to urge the Transvaal Government to treat British settlers in the South African Republic exactly as the Dutch were treated in Cape Colony and Natal. Every step taken by the man who is charged with conspiring to overthrow the Republics was a step in the direction of strengthening their independence. Had the advice he tendered to the Afrikander Bond up to the very outbreak of hostilities been taken to heart by those to whom it was addressed, it is safe to say that the South African Republic and the Orange Free State would have established their independence on a basis from which it would have been impossible to dislodge it. His advice was disregarded, not because it was felt to be inadequate for the purpose for which it was designed, but because that purpose was one which the Afrikander Bond had resolutely set itself to thwart. And yet Lord Milner had grudged no pains not only to make himself acquainted with the factors of the problem, but with the temperament, wishes, and prejudices of the Dutch population of the colony. He devoted what spare time he could command to mastering the taal, a task which for one with a thorough knowledge of German is by no means a difficult one. I, who have no German, by assiduous sittings in the Cape Parliament and by diligent spelling out of the articles in *Ons Land*, was able in about three months to follow the drift of a conversation or of a public speech in that debased dialect. Lord Milner, from a very early period of his official life in South Africa until martial law had suppressed Dutch organs of sedition, was a daily student of *Ons Land*, and he often called my attention to the great ability with which its articles—a large majority of them being devoted to attacks upon himself—were habitually written. He was easy of access to all classes, and until he

made it clear that there was no room for two systems in South Africa, and that the survivor must be the English system, he was personally most popular, even with the extreme Dutch party. The general opinion formed about him in the colony is concisely summarized in the '*Times* History of the War in South Africa.'

> The new High Commissioner (it is said[1]) exactly fulfilled the predictions of his friends. Towards the Transvaal he adopted a patient and conciliatory attitude, pressing the representations of the Imperial Government as gently as possible, and avoiding carefully all subjects that might give rise to fresh disputes. In the meantime he devoted himself with remarkable energy to acquainting himself with South African affairs, and more especially with the affairs of Cape Colony. He travelled through the colony from end to end, coming in close contact with every section of colonial opinion. He studied Dutch in order to bring himself nearer to the Dutch farmers. He was accessible to all, and the frankness of his character and the simplicity of his manner endeared him to all who came in contact with him. Never had there been a Governor so universally popular. In spite of the captious criticisms of a few extremists, who instinctively felt that a man of such ability must be dangerous, the Dutch colonists regarded him with favour, and everywhere on his tours received him with enthusiasm.

Lord Milner was more likely than another to be impressed by the good qualities of the Dutch population. Their kindly courtesy and natural dignity, enhanced rather than depreciated by an insincerity which it takes long to fathom, appeal at once to a generous heart and a refined taste. His own frank nature was instinctively repelled by the double-dealing for which the Boers were but too notorious; but for racial failings one is apt to make allowances which one denies to individuals. The buoyant optimism of the Irish has, for instance, led Irishmen to a joyous exaggeration which would be condemned were it indulged in by the phlegmatic Englishman. And so, though Lord Milner had very early to learn the lesson that no reliance could be placed upon the statement of a Dutchman, whose character in other respects was irreproachable, the defect did not inspire him with that antipathy for the individual which a similar offence committed by an Englishman would undoubtedly have caused. Perhaps he did not make sufficient allowance for the short-sightedness and prejudiced ignorance of the Dutch as a whole. 'Panoplied hatred, insensate ambitions, invincible ignor-

[1] '*Times* History of the War in South Africa,' p. 195.

ance,' were words which did not come to him until a late stage in the war. He knew how infinitely better it was for the Dutch themselves to be ranged in union and in the enjoyment of complete autonomy under the protection of the British flag than it could possibly be for them in a united South African Republic under a flag of their own, even if the fleets of Great Britain protected that flag against foreign menace. He was convinced, as the more intelligent Dutchmen who had travelled and seen the world were convinced, that the withdrawal of Great Britain from her overlordship in South Africa would be followed by internal disruptions not unlike to that which has been the fate of South American Republics, an almost certain contingency to which Sir Bartle Frere had called attention twenty years before. He realized, moreover, that effective pressure which stopped short of armed intervention could only be exercised on the obdurate oligarchy at Pretoria by the Afrikander Bond, to which Mr. Kruger owed so much and from which he expected even more.

These are the considerations that must be borne in mind in studying the first authoritative and personal speech delivered by Lord Milner in South Africa. Time and the place were equally significant. Although the pressure applied to Mr. Kruger by Mr. Chamberlain was of the gentlest diplomatic character, and though yielding to reasonable demands on Kruger's part might have averted a rupture, there is no doubt but that the President was already contemplating and preparing for an armed conflict. Dr. Leyds had resigned his post of State Secretary in order to proceed to Europe on a mission, to use a memorable phrase of Mr. Asquith's, of 'touting for allies.' Ostensibly, his visit was for the purpose of securing expert treatment for a diplomatic affection of the throat. From what subsequently became known, it appears that the throat specialists of Europe lived next door to the statesmen who control the policies of their respective countries. He was succeeded in his office at Pretoria by Mr. Reitz, a gentleman of unbalanced mind, which had more than once tipped up in the direction of insanity, who was one of the founders of the Afrikander Bond and a docile pupil of that remarkable Anglophobe Carl Borckenhagen. We know from Mr. Reitz's own pen what were his lifelong views of the rela-

tions of the two races in South Africa and the ambitions he had based thereon, for they are summarized in the last words of his 'Appeal to the Afrikanders':

> Whether the result be victory or death, liberty will assuredly arise in South Africa, like the sun from out the mists of the morning, just as freedom dawned over the United States of America a little more than a century ago. Then from Zambesi to Simon's Bay it will be 'AFRICA FOR THE AFRIKANDERS.'

His ambitions were grave enough, but his methods of attaining them were so childish that we find at a later period the Chief Justice of the Cape Colony, Sir Henry de Villiers, informing his brother at Bloemfontein that 'Reitz seemed to treat the whole matter as a big joke.'[1] At this time, too, the Afrikander Bond, amply furnished with unfamiliar funds, was organizing for a life-and-death struggle in Cape Colony. The wire-pullers had not yet shown their hand, because it was essential to the success of the campaign that the Moderates and those actuated by personal antipathy for Mr. Rhodes should not be frightened away. The scene of Lord Milner's first public announcement was historical. Graaf Reinet[2] had been, even in pre-English days, the centre of disaffection to all forms of government. They were in rebellion against the Dutch East India Company before the first English occupation. It was at Graaf Reinet, on February 22, 1796, that Messrs. Joubert, Jan Groning, and Jan Kruger—familiar names—hauled down the British flag. It was these same persons who, as ringleaders of the rebellion, elected Marthinus Prinsloo to be 'protector of the voice of the people,' a phrase which they had borrowed from the French revolutionists. Then, as now, we are told[3]

> Hope that aid from abroad would shortly reach them, for Woyer, one of the anti-English party, had been confident of French assistance, and had gone to procure it. His confidence was not altogether unfounded, for the French Admiral, De Cercy, sent the frigate *Préneuse* to Algoa Bay with ammunition for the use of the Republican party in Graaff Reinet.

Later on (1798) the burghers of Graaf Reinet arose to rescue their old Commandant, Adriaan van Jaarsveld, who had been

[1] Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 369, p. 4.
[2] The 'f' in the name is doubled or left single indifferently. I have spelt it as it is spelt by the authorities I quote.
[3] Theal, 1795-1834, p. 14.

arrested on the modest charge of having robbed by forgery the money of the Orphan Chamber Fund. In defence of this interesting plunderer of the poor, Marthinus Prinsloo sent a force, which after some months' guerilla warfare surrendered. It was in the Graaf Reinet district that the incidents occurred out of which arose the legend of Slagter's Nek. From that time onward it had always been a centre of disaffection and a stronghold of Afrikanderdom in its most extreme form. Shortly before the visit of Lord Milner to this spot there had been, according to an uncontradicted report of the *South African Review*,[1] a manifestation of the most flagrant disloyalty. Dutch farmers, it was stated, had ridden into the town and riddled with bullets a transparency showing the Queen's portrait, and had terrorized the unarmed loyalists of the neighbourhood.

Such, then, was the place and such were the times in which Lord Milner made his historic appeal to the Dutch to avert a race-war in South Africa, which seemed, and indeed was, inevitable. The perverse ingenuity of the pro-Boers in England has since construed this last appeal to the loyalty and good sense of the Dutch into a deliberate and wilful challenge. On March 3, 1898, Lord Milner attended the opening of the railway to Graaf Reinet. He was entertained in the usual way, and, quite unexpectedly, an address was presented to him by the Graaf Reinet branch of the Afrikander Bond, 'protesting against the charges of disloyalty made against the Bond, and requesting him to convey to the Queen the expression of the unswerving loyalty of that organization.' Lord Milner replied that it was his rule as a Governor not to talk politics, especially not party politics, but where controversial matter had to be touched 'to speak frankly and without reserve,' a course 'which might not be the way to win immediate popularity, but was most conducive to clearing the air, to removing inveterate misunderstanding, and to promoting in the long-run those objects which all good men and loyal citizens had at heart.'

He then proceeds to reply to the Bond address as follows:

[1] Weekly satirical paper published in Cape Town.

Of course, I am glad to be assured that any section of Her Majesty's subjects is loyal,[1] but I should be much more glad to be allowed to take that for granted. Why should I not? What reason could there be for any disloyalty? Of course you are loyal. You have thriven wonderfully well under that Government. This country, despite its great extent and its fine climate, has some tremendous natural disadvantages to contend against, and yet, let anyone compare its position to-day with what it was at the commencement of Her Majesty's reign or over thirty years ago. The progress in material wealth is enormous, and the prospects of future progress are greater still, and you have other blessings which by no means accompany material wealth. You live under an absolutely free system of government, protecting the rights and encouraging the spirit of independence of every citizen. You have courts of law manned by men of the highest ability and integrity, and secure in the discharge of their high functions from all external interference.

You have—at least, as regards the white races—perfect equality of citizenship, and these things have not been won from a reluctant Sovereign. They have been freely and gladly bestowed upon you, because freedom and self-government, justice and equality, are the first principles of British policy. And they are secured to you by the strength of the Power that gave them, and whose navy protects your shores from attack without your being asked to contribute one pound to that protection unless you yourselves desire it. Well, gentlemen, of course you are loyal; it would be monstrous if you were not. And now, if I have one wish, it is that I may never again have to deal at any length with this topic. But in order that I may put it aside with a good conscience, I wish, having been more or less compelled to deal with it, to do so honestly, and not to shut my eyes to unpleasant facts.

The great bulk of the population of the colony—Dutch as well as English—are, I firmly believe, thoroughly loyal, in the sense that they know they live under a good Constitution, and have no wish to change it, and regard with feelings of reverence and pride that august lady at the head of it. If we had only domestic questions to consider, if political controversy were confined in this colony to the internal affairs of the country, there would, no doubt, be a great deal of hard language used by conflicting parties, and very likely among the usual amenities of party warfare somebody would call somebody else disloyal; but the thing would be so absurd—so obviously absurd—that nobody would take it seriously, and the charge would be forgotten almost as soon as uttered.

What gives the sting to the charge of disloyalty in this case, what makes it stick, and what makes people wince under it, is the fact that the political controversies of this country at present unfortunately turn largely upon another question. I mean the relations of Her Majesty's Government to the South African Republic, and that, whenever there is any prospect of any difference between them, a number of people in the colony at once vehemently, and without even the semblance of impartiality, espouse the side of the Republic. Personally, I do not think that they are disloyal. I am familiar at home with the figure of the politician — often the best of men, though singularly injudicious —who, whenever any disputes arise with another country, starts with the assumption that his own country must be in the wrong. He is not disloyal, but really he cannot be very much surprised if he appears to be so to those of his fellow-citizens whose inclination is to start with the exactly opposite assumption; and so I do not take it that in this

[1] The extracts are taken from the *Cape Times*, March 4, 1898, republished by that paper on June 16, 1899.

case people are necessarily disloyal because they carry their sympathy with the Government of the Transvaal—which, seeing the close tie of relationship which unites a great portion of the population here with the dominant section in that country, is perfectly natural—to a point which gives some ground for the assertion that they seem to care much more for the independence of the Transvaal than for the honour and the interests of the country to which they themselves belong.

For my own part, I believe the whole object of those people in espousing the cause of the Transvaal is to prevent an open rupture between that country and the British Government. They loathe very naturally and rightly the idea of war, and they think that if they can only impress upon the British Government that in case of war with the Transvaal it would have a great number of its own subjects at least in sympathy against it, that is a way to prevent such a calamity.

But in this they are totally wrong, for this policy rests on the assumption that Great Britain has some occult design on the independence of the Transvaal—that independence which it has itself given—and that it is seeking causes of quarrel in order to take that independence away. But that assumption is the exact opposite of the truth. (Cheers.) So far from seeking causes of quarrel, it is the constant desire of the British Government to avoid causes of quarrel, and not to take up lightly the complaints (and they are numerous) which reach it from British subjects within the Transvaal, for the very reason that it wishes to avoid even the semblance of interference in the internal affairs of that country, and, as regards its external relations, to insist only on that minimum of control which it has always distinctly reserved, and has reserved, I may add, solely in the interests of the future tranquillity of South Africa. That is Great Britain's moderate attitude, and she cannot be frightened out of it. It is not any aggressiveness on the part of Her Majesty's Government which now keeps up the spirit of unrest in South Africa. Not at all. It is that unprogressiveness—I will not say the retrogressiveness—of the Government of the Transvaal and its deep suspicion of the intention of Great Britain which makes it devote its attention to imaginary external dangers, when every impartial observer can see perfectly well that the real dangers which threaten it are internal. Now, I wish to be perfectly fair. Therefore, let me say that this suspicion, though absolutely groundless, is not, after all that has happened, altogether unnatural.

I accept the situation that at the present moment any advice that I could tender, or that any of your British fellow-citizens could tender in that quarter, though it was the best advice in the world, would be instantly rejected because it was British; but the same does not apply to the Dutch citizens of this colony, and especially to those who have gone so far in the expression of their sympathy for the Transvaal as to expose themselves to these charges of disloyalty to their own flag. Their goodwill at least cannot be suspected across the border; and if all they desire—and I believe it is what they desire—is to preserve the South African Republic and to promote good relations between it and the British colonies and Government, then let them use all their influence, which is bound to be great, not in confirming the Transvaal in unjustified suspicions, not in encouraging its Government in obstinate resistance to all reform, but in inducing it gradually to assimilate its institutions, and, what is even more important than institutions, the temper and spirit of its administration, to those of the free communities of South Africa, such as this colony or the Orange Free State. That is the direction in which a peaceful way out of these inveterate troubles, which have now plagued this country for more than thirty years, is to be found.

Eight days after the delivery of that speech Mr. Merriman, who was a foremost champion of the cause of that Afrikander Bond he once so mercilessly denounced, wrote a private letter to President Steyn, in which, though he naturally criticises Lord Milner's speech at Graaf Reinet, he frankly admits the justice and soundness of its basis.

You will (he says, writing from Stellenbosch, March 11, 1898[1]), no doubt, have seen both Sir Alfred Milner's speech at Graaf Reinet and the reported interview with Mr. Rhodes in the *Cape Times*. Through both there runs a note of thinly-veiled hostility to the Transvaal and the uneasy menace of trouble ahead. What, I wonder, would be said if the ruler of either of the two Republics went out of his way to comment on the retrogressive character of some Cape legislation—*e.g.*, the free provision of liquor to natives—or if they enlarged on the menace to European occupation in such a State as Basutoland?

Yet one cannot conceal the fact that the greatest danger to the future lies in the attitude of President Kruger and his vain hope of building up a State on a foundation of a narrow, unenlightened minority, and his obstinate rejection of all prospect of using the materials which lie ready to his hand to establish a true Republic on a broad Liberal basis. The report of recent discussions in the Volksraad on his finances and their mismanagement fill one with apprehension. *Such a state of affairs cannot last. It must break down from inherent rottenness, and it will be well if the fall does not sweep away the freedom of all of us.*[2]

I write in no hostility to Republics; my own feelings are all in the opposite direction, but the foes of that form of government are too often those of their own household. I am quite sure that you have done what you can in modifying the attitude at Pretoria; but I entreat you, for the welfare of South Africa, to persevere, however unsatisfactory it may be to see your advice flouted and your motives so cruelly misrepresented by a section of colonists. *Humanly speaking, the advice and goodwill of the Free State is the only thing that stands between the South African Republic and a catastrophe.* I do not attach so much importance to the Kotzé incident. It has very little sympathy outside the Jingo press, but the radical fault is the utter incapacity of the body that affects to issue its mandates to the courts. In England it is a Parliament, but then it represents the intelligence of the country, and in Switzerland the same. In the Transvaal it is a narrow oligarchy.

Believe me,
Yours truly,
JOHN X. MERRIMAN.

The significance of Lord Milner's speech at Graaf Reinet was better appreciated in South Africa than at home. The Afrikander Bond was furious, not because of any imputation upon their loyalty which they read into the speech, but because it revealed to them that the real goal of their politics was no secret to the High Com-

[1] Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 369, p. 6.

[2] The italics are mine.

missioner. From that time forth dated the animosity to Lord Milner which was not openly displayed until after the fall of Schreiner's Ministry. The Dutch hostility evoked by this speech was as significant and informative as the speech itself, and renders it quite clear that what the Dutch element in the Cape then desired was not peace but war. Peace undoubtedly it would have preferred, combined with a full recognition of Dutch supremacy in South Africa, but it was made abundantly manifest that the Afrikanders would prefer war to a peace which carried with it unchallenged acceptance of the paramountcy of Great Britain. If anyone doubts this interpretation of the 'writing on the wall,' let him ask himself what would have been the result of the adoption of the advice given by Lord Milner at Graaf Reinet. In the first place, he asked the Dutch to surrender none of the privileges conferred on them, and indeed encouraged them to turn those privileges to account in a constitutional manner; in the second place, he pledged himself and the Imperial Government by anticipation to refrain from all interference with the independence of the Republic or with its management of its internal affairs so long as it complied with the spirit and the letter of the London Conventions; in the third place, the maximum of reform in the Transvaal which he pleaded for was modest in the extreme. He only asked that the South African Republic, should bring the law and the temper in which was administered up to the level of that which it obtained not only in the British colony, but in the Orange Free State; and lastly, he avoided a direct appeal which might savour of interference with the Executive and Volksraad of the Transvaal. He urged the Afrikander Bond, which he knew had a preponderating influence in the councils of Pretoria, to use their influence for the purpose of removing any obstacle to the enjoyment by the Republic of its virtual independence. No statesman could have shown a more tender regard for the susceptibilities of a neighbouring and equal Power than did Lord Milner for a State which was admittedly dependent upon the Crown. Mr. Merriman affected, as was natural, to see in this speech a thinly-veiled

menace to the Transvaal, and in one sense every warning, however friendly, is a veiled or unveiled menace. If a doctor warns his patient that excessive indulgence in alcohol will result in delirium tremens and death, he threatens him with the consequences which he foresees of an abuse of his unquestioned individual liberty. Lord Milner was in some respects in the position of a doctor dealing with a patient who was exceedingly irritable with regard to suggestions which he thought amounted to restrictions upon his liberty, and, as tactful physicians often do, Lord Milner advised those closely connected with the patient by ties of affection and kinship to urge an abandonment of habits which, unchecked, must have disastrous consequences. Is there a supporter of the Boers in Europe who will deny that if this advice had been adopted there would have been no war, and that the independence of the two Republics would have been established on a firm and lasting basis? If, then, the independence of the two Republics had been the principal object of the Afrikander party in the colony, they would have welcomed and gladly adopted the friendly advice given to them; but as they spurned the advice, and turned upon the author of it as an enemy to the sacred cause of Afrikanderdom, we must assume that there was beyond the desire for the well-being of the Republic an ulterior goal which was not yet disclosed. Again, by tracing the course of the consequences which would have followed the acceptance of Lord Milner's warning, we shall realize *a priori* what the motives of the Afrikander Bond were, which have been amply demonstrated *a posteriori*. If the Republics, or if the Republic, had set its house in order, and had treated what may be called its paying guests as Dutch settlers in the Cape Colony had always been treated under British rule, the independence of the Republics, as I have said, would have been established beyond the possibility of attack. The intelligent Uitlanders of the Transvaal, increasing rapidly in numbers as successive sources of mineral wealth were tapped, would have leavened the sixteenth-century views of the burghers with the leaven of the nineteenth century. The ignorant, narrow-minded, and illiberal oligarchy of Pretoria would have become an

impossible anachronism. The passion for local self-government would not have been diminished, but rather augmented; and at the same time the burghers of an independent Republic would have realized that their interests and those of the other States and colonies of South Africa were one and indivisible. They would have grasped the elementary and substantial fact that artificial boundaries could not be allowed to check the free circulation of trade, or the intelligent extension of railways, or the adoption of a single liberal and enlightened policy with regard to the native population. Considerations of health, wealth, happiness, and ambition would have driven all the white inhabitants of South Africa to adopt a comprehensive system of federation which would have respected local independence. No colonist will controvert the fact that such would have been the natural trend of events, nor can I imagine any outsiders denying the beneficent results which would have followed the line of this natural development. Why, then, was such a consummation distasteful not only to Mr. Kruger and his associates, to Mr. Steyn and Mr. Reitz and the other disciples of Carl Borckenhagen, but to the wire-pullers of the Afrikander Bond in Cape Colony? The answer is simple, and may be found on almost any preceding page in this book. The explanation is that in the very nature of things a Confederation such as would naturally have been evolved would have been saturated, I will not say with English ideals and English modes of thought, but with the ideals and modes of thought of most civilized white men of the nineteenth century, and that was exactly the one thing against which the Boers had struggled for the greater part of a century. The Great Trek, with all the sacrifices it involved, with all the sufferings it entailed, with the miserable prospect of material prosperity it held out, was inspired solely by a passionate desire to get away from the habits and customs, the bustle and enterprise, of latter-day civilization.

The object of the greater part of this book has been to illustrate the divergence between the two irreconcilable ideals. It has not been so much a combat between Boer and Briton as a struggle between nineteenth-century ideals

and those of the sixteenth century. The gulf which separates them cannot be better illustrated than by comparing the proclamation of Piet Retief with that issued by Sir George Napier when he extended the Queen's sovereignty over Natal:

> We quit this colony (said Retief in 1837) under the full assurance that the English Government has nothing more to require of us, and will allow us to govern ourselves without its interference in the future. We propose in the course of our journey, and on arriving in the country in which we shall permanently reside, to make known to the native tribes our intentions and our desire to live in peace and friendly intercourse with them.
>
> We are resolved, wherever we go, to uphold the first principles of liberty; but while we shall take care that no one shall be held in a state of slavery, it is our determination to maintain such regulations as may suppress crime and preserve the proper relations between master and servant.... We complain of the severe losses which we have been forced to sustain by the emancipation of our slaves and the vexatious laws which have been enacted respecting them.

And with this should be read the less sophisticated confession of his niece, Mrs. Anna Steenekamp, who accompanied her uncle in the Great Trek. I have quoted it before, but its brevity justifies its repetition:

> The reasons for which we abandoned our lands and homesteads, our country and kindred, were the following:
>
> 1. The continual depredations and robberies of the Kaffirs, and their arrogance and overbearing conduct, and the fact that, in spite of the fine promises made to us by our Government, we nevertheless received no compensation for the property of which we were despoiled.
>
> 2. The shameful and unjust proceedings with reference to the freedom of our slaves. And yet it is not so much their freedom that drove us to such lengths as their being placed on an equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinctions of race and religion, so that it was intolerable for any decent Christian to bow down beneath such a yoke, wherefore we rather withdrew in order thus to preserve our doctrines in purity.[1]

The other side of the picture is depicted in Sir George Napier's proclamation issued six years later, in which it is set forth

> That Her Majesty's said Commissioner[2] is instructed distinctly to declare that the three next mentioned conditions, all of them so manifestly righteous and expedient as to receive, it is to be hoped, their cheerful recognition by the inhabitants of Natal, are to be considered as absolutely indispensable to the permission which it is proposed to give the emigrants

[1] Sir John Robinson, 'A Lifetime in South Africa,' p. 46.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 289.

to occupy the territory in question, and to enjoy therein a settled government under British protection (?)

First, that there shall not be in the eyes of the law any distinction or disqualification whatever founded on mere distinction of colour, origin, language, or creed, but that the protection of the law in letter and in substance shall be extended impartially to all alike.

Second, that no aggression shall be sanctioned upon the natives residing beyond the limits of the colony under any plea whatever by any private person or any body of men unless acting under the immediate authority and order of the Government.

Third, that slavery in any shape or under any modification is absolutely unlawful, as in every other portion of Her Majesty's dominions.

Thus (says Sir John Robinson) was made known in the words of the proclamation the gracious desire of Her Majesty to knit the hearts of all her subjects to her person and Government, as evinced by her willingness to concede to her people at Port Natal every just personal right and every reasonable political privilege, and that the natural resources of the country may be gradually developed under Her Majesty's firm but fostering rule, stimulating the industries which can never prosper but beneath settled institutions, and securing the advantages which are enjoyed by every colony of Great Britain.

As it was in 1837-1843, so it was in 1897-1901. The spirit of British politics breathes in the advice tendered by Lord Milner at Graaf Reinet, and the spirit of Dutch opposition is equally manifest in the scorn with which that advice was rejected.

As matters stood on the date of the Graaf Reinet speech, there was no reason why the differences between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic should not have been adjusted upon an enduring and satisfactory basis. All, however, depended, as Lord Milner well knew, upon the attitude adopted by the Afrikander Bond. The elections for the Assembly were pending, and it is not too much to say that upon their issue hung as in a balance the question of peace or war. To the Governor and High Commissioner it mattered nothing whether the majority returned to Parliament consisted of followers of Mr. Rhodes or adherents of the Afrikander Bond. No critic, however bitter, had charged Lord Milner with having departed a hair's breadth from the constitutional lines of absolute impartiality laid down for the representative of the Crown in a self-governing colony. Indeed, it was to be demonstrated later on that Lord Milner stretched this constitutional axiom as long as it was possible in favour of the Government which was supported by the Afrikander Bond. It did matter, however, very much indeed

to the representative of the Crown and the guardian of Imperial interests in South Africa that no party in the country over which he ruled should encourage a neighbouring State in hostility to Great Britain, or should allow itself to be classed as the friend of the enemies of the Empire. Had the Afrikander Bond taken the advice tendered to it at Graaf Reinet, which coincided, as we have seen, with the opinions of Mr. Merriman, Lord Milner would have seen with Jovian unconcern the triumph of Mr. Schreiner and his supporters. The very fact that Mr. Schreiner was the chosen leader of the Afrikander party, though not himself a member of the Afrikander Bond, must have encouraged Lord Milner to believe that the seeds sown at Graaf Reinet would not have fallen altogether on unfruitful ground. Mr. Schreiner had been 'discovered' by Mr. Rhodes, and he was a member of a remarkable family distinguished rather for great natural ability than for capacity for self-control. That he was loyal to the Empire, and anxious that Cape Colony should play an important part in the future development of the Empire, there can be no doubt. But although, as an Anglo-German, he cannot be suspected of having inherited the prejudices and antipathies of the Franco-Dutch stock, he was still a pronounced Afrikander, and it was on this side of his multilateral character that Mr. Hofmeyr played after the breach had occurred between Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Schreiner. It is affectation to pretend to overlook family influence in the case of a contemporary when we rely upon it so largely in judging the conduct and policy of men who have passed away. Mr. Schreiner had married the sister of Mr. Reitz, the half-mad State Secretary of the Transvaal, and Mrs. Schreiner was so pronounced a sympathizer with the Boers that she wrote a letter of encouragement to a seditious meeting held at Worcester while the war was in progress which passed resolutions condemning the policy of her husband after the dissolution of his Ministry. His sister, Mrs. Cronwright Schreiner, who, as Olive Schreiner, had secured herself by one remarkable novel a lasting place in the temple of English literature, had at one time been a passionate supporter of the policy of Mr. Rhodes. She had seen cause to change her views, and, like all converts, she displayed

a more fiery enthusiasm for the cause which she embraced than for that she had deserted. She had married an English colonist who had sufficient modesty to merge the insignificance of his own name in that of the lady who had rendered her name illustrious. Curiously enough, Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner (*né* Cronwright) had in his earlier days been a fierce opponent of the Afrikander Bond.

> What, asked Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner on one occasion, is the Afrikander Bond? It is (he said in answer to his own question) anti-English in its aims, its officers and its language are Dutch, and it is striving to gain such power as absolutely to control the Cape Parliament. What sort of men were they? The vast majority of Bondsmen (continued Mr. Cronwright) are nearly illiterate, ignorant, and governed almost entirely by emotion instead of reason. The wisdom of the Bond represents to a very great extent the ignorance of the farming population of the colony.[1]

Mr. Cronwright, however, seems to have changed his name and his politics together. But in this strange Schreiner family the influences were by no means entirely upon one side. Mrs. Schreiner, the mother of the late Prime Minister, English by birth, was and is a passionate loyalist, whose intense admiration for Mr. Rhodes was not dimmed or shaken by the events which severed his relations with her son. Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Stuart, Mr. Schreiner's sister and niece respectively, are most active members of the Loyal Women's Guild, and with their elder brother, Mr. Theophilus Schreiner, have conducted with extraordinary assiduity and ability a campaign in the United Kingdom to frustrate the schemes of the Afrikander Bond. Mr. W. P. Schreiner's temperament was such as to cause him to be influenced greatly by the differences and the conflicting gusts of passion in the midst of which his domestic life was passed. He was intensely optimistic and credulous to a degree uncommon even in South Africa. It has been truly said that one of the great tests of statesmanship is freedom from or liability to amazement. *Nil admirari* is a good working motto. To expect that anything may happen is to be prepared for anything that does happen. Judged by this standard, Mr. Schreiner was but a very indifferent statesman. His

[1] The extract is taken from Mr. E. T. Cook's 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' p. 32.

political existence was passed in a bewildering succession of disillusions. Though he was leader of the Afrikander party, dependent upon the support of the Afrikander Bond, he enjoyed its vote and patronage long before he discovered that its aims and objects were inconsistent with the maintenance of British supremacy in South Africa. He was dazed by the discovery of Mr. Rhodes' participation in the Raid. But no amount of rude shocks could shake his sturdy optimism. To the last moment he believed that Mr. Kruger would not fight. He was even more intensely convinced that, if he did fight, Mr. Steyn, the President of the Orange Free State, would keep clear of the conflict. He was confident that in no circumstances and under no provocation would the Cape Dutch abjure their allegiance and throw in their lot with the enemies of the Crown. Yet all these things happened within the space of a very few months.

The accession of Mr. Schreiner to the leadership of the Afrikander party was of incalculable value to them, and may be accounted as one of the master-strokes of Mr. Hofmeyr. Hypocrisy, it is said, is the homage which vice pays to virtue, and it is certain that a dishonest confederacy always selects for its nominal chieftain, if it can secure him, a man of unquestioned integrity. There were many Dutch colonists who, as they frequently remarked to me, loyal in their heads if not in their hearts, were convinced that a Ministry presided over by Mr. Schreiner would never fail in its allegiance to the sovereign Power. The confidence inspired by Mr. Schreiner's acceptance of the post of leader was strengthened by the support he received from Mr. (afterwards Sir Richard) Solomon. Sir Richard Solomon was the nephew of Mr. Saul Solomon, who, as I have mentioned in a previous chapter, occupied in Cape politics a very remarkable position, which he had acquired, partly by his sterling devotion to a cause which was not intrinsically popular, and partly by the pluck which forbade physical disadvantages to deter him from adopting a public career. Of all the men of eminence in the Cape Legislature at the time, Mr. Solomon, as he then was, would have been picked out by an impartial observer as the one politician, with the exception of Mr. Rhodes and Mr. (now Sir James) Rose-

Innes, who had more than a provincial and local grasp of the Imperial issues involved in the South African Republic. His adhesion to Mr. Schreiner was worth a great many votes, because no one, loyal or disloyal, ever dreamed of associating Mr. Solomon with any intrigues against the supremacy of Great Britain. He was actuated, no doubt, in the course which he took in 1898 by that personal antipathy to Mr. Rhodes which also caused Mr. Rose-Innes to plough a lonely furrow. Mr. Merriman's co-operation was valuable for what may be called 'outside purposes.' In descent, education, and manner he was a typical Englishman; and no visitor to the Cape would ever have suspected the tall, handsome Englishman, who did not disguise his thankfulness that he was not as other colonials were, of being a lukewarm supporter of the Imperial connection. Passages from old speeches might be cited to prove his Laodicean loyalty, but, on the other hand, a similar research would have revealed passages indicating the most passionate attachment to the Empire. Within the limits of the colony, however, Mr. Merriman could count but few personal followers. The Dutch did not trust him any more than the colonists of British descent. They admire slimness, but it must be of that kind which disguises a resolute and inveterate purpose, and not of the kind which finds ingenious excuses for bending to every passing wind that blows. Mr. Merriman was, moreover, an upright and capable administrator and a Parliamentary debater of no mean order. Had he been able to control his tongue as well as to use it, and had he kept his passion as well in hand as he kept his principles, he would easily have been the foremost man in the Cape Parliament.

Of the rest of the party which rallied around Mr. Schreiner, it is sufficient to say that they were all more or less puppets in the deft hands of the ingenious Mr. Hofmeyr. So far as they enjoyed any separate political personality, they might be divided into three classes: the fervently disloyal, the potentially disloyal, and the tepidly loyal. Amongst the rank and file of the Afrikander party it would have been impossible to find a single man inspired by a spark of pride in, or a glimmer of affection for, the Empire in which he lived. The British fleet constituted an excellent service of sea

police. The British Government from time to time expended a little money in the colony, and British capital, which followed the British flag, was indispensable for the execution of most schemes for the enrichment and development of South Africa. These things had all a certain value in the eyes of the Dutch colonists, but they were mere trifles if weighed in the balance against the charms of a United Dutch South Africa under a Republican flag. The Schreiner-Hofmeyr combination, therefore, was a formidable one in a country where voting power was pretty evenly distributed. The net was fine enough to enclose the timorous small-fry, and strong enough to bear the weight of political sharks as represented by the rebel faction.

It is quite possible that Lord Milner's Graaf Reinet speech might have given the waverers pause if they had not been lulled into acquiescence in the policy of their colleagues by the presence in their midst of Messrs. Schreiner and Solomon. On the other side there were divided counsels and a dormant leadership. Sir James Rose-Innes and men of his character and standing were passionately loyal, but were almost as passionately opposed to Mr. Rhodes, chiefly because they sincerely believed that his Imperialism was a mere cloak for designs of personal aggrandizement. Mr. Rhodes himself was the acknowledged mainspring of the Progressive machinery, and no disguise was made of the fact that he and those with whom he was associated found the funds for the electioneering campaign. Yet the real leader of the party found it impossible, or at least inconvenient, openly to reassume the position from which he abdicated on the morrow of the Raid. Amongst his political adherents there were not more than two or three of even second-rate ability, while the mediocre majority of them were as much his creatures as the rank and file of the Afrikander party were the puppets of Mr. Hofmeyr. It was a curious contest, conducted on the one side and the other by two men of very different character and of very different ideals, who had once been close political allies, neither of whom cared or dared to lead in person the forces he controlled. Even the disadvantages under which they were fighting would not have robbed the Progressives of victory had not the action of the Inde-

pendents resulted indirectly in the defeat of a Redistribution Bill, which would have changed the balance of power. The Progressive party, mainly concentrated in the big towns, had a numerical majority of votes throughout the colony. The agricultural districts, however, had a preponderance of representatives, and the result was that the opinions of the majority were represented in the Parliament by a minority. The Redistribution Bill, which was shelved by the defeat of Sir Gordon Sprigg's Ministry on a vote of confidence, would, on the principle of one man one vote, and one vote one value, have given the Progressives a working majority in the Legislature. The triumph of a determined and apparently a united Ministry, subterraneously directed by the intriguer whom Mr. Merriman had nicknamed 'the Mole,' brought about a state of affairs admirably adapted to further the designs of the Pan-Afrikander party. That this was the case is proved pretty conclusively by one of the intercepted letters of a later date which passed between Dr. Te Water, a member of Mr. Schreiner's Government, and President Steyn of the Orange Free State. Just as the late Professor Owen was able to describe a prehistoric mammal from the appearance of a single bone, so we may gather from two or three casually revealed letters the nature of the communications which were constantly passing between Cape Town and Bloemfontein and Pretoria.

Circumstances (wrote Dr. Te Water on May 8, 1899, to President Steyn)[1] appear to me now to be such that our friends in Pretoria must be yielding. With their friends at the head of the Government here, they have a better chance that reasonable propositions made by them will be accepted than they would have had if we had been unsuccessful at the late elections and our enemies were advisers. . . . We must now play to win time. Governments are not perpetual, and I pray that the present team,[2] so unjustly disposed towards us, may receive their reward before long. Their successors, I am certain, will follow a less hateful policy towards us.

And in a later letter of May 17, 1899, there are significant words to which we have but an imperfect key:

I should like a few words of explanation as to what you mean by saying that 'the Cape Ministry will be able to do much more good.'[3] In what

[1] Blue-book, C. 369, p. 10. [2] Lord Salisbury's Government.
[3] A clue will probably be found to this quotation from a letter of Mr. Steyn's

respect do you think that we can be of more use than before? I would very much like to know your views, and if we are not already working in that direction, I will try as far as possible to do what I can to give effect to your wishes, which may be for the welfare of all. Please let me hear immediately and fully about this. In other respects I agree entirely with your remarks. There is one thing that you must not forget—that things here go awkwardly. Even our information is at times not what it ought to be, and for that, perhaps, my Bloemfontein friends are also a little to blame.

Ten days later we get from Dr. Te Water, in a letter to the same correspondent, some indications of the means by which Bloemfontein and Pretoria were kept in touch with Cape Town, and glimpses into the nature of these communications:

I keep all your communications strictly private. Naturally you do not exclude my colleagues and our friend Hofmeyr. I have often read extracts to them; but do not be afraid, I shall not give you away. To-day by post I send you personally our private telegraphic code for use. I borrowed one from Sauer. We have only three, and I must therefore ask you to let us have it back in the course of a couple of weeks. Please keep it under lock, and use it yourself only. It is quite possible that you will have to communicate with us, and the telegraph service is not entirely to be trusted. I am afraid that things leak out there in one way or another. I shall not answer your letter now. I heartily hope that your intermediation at such a critical moment[1] will bear glorious fruit. Do your best. It is honestly now the time to yield a little, however one may later again tighten the rope. Keep us duly informed of the course of affairs. I sincerely regret that neither Schreiner nor Hofmeyr can go, but although I have not been able to speak to Schreiner fully about this since my return, I am afraid it is now out of the question.

I shall have more to say on the subject of these intercepted letters later; but a quotation from them is necessary here to show the intimate relations which existed between the wire-pullers of Pretoria and the anti-English party in Cape Town, which was soon to have its representatives in a Ministry of the Crown.

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in a passage in a communication from Sir Henry de Villiers to his brother, the Chief Judge of the Orange Free State, which is found in the same Blue-book.

'When I was in the Transvaal three months ago,' says Sir Henry, 'I found that Reitz and others had the most extraordinary notions of the policy and duties of a Cape Ministry in case of war. They are Ministers of the Crown, and it will be their duty to afford every possible assistance to the British Government. Under normal conditions a responsible Ministry is perfectly independent in matters of internal concern, but in case of war they are bound to place all the resources of the colony at the disposal of the British Crown; at least, if they did not do so they would be liable to dismissal.'

Mr. Steyn apparently shared Mr. Reitz's ignorance of this elementary constitutional axiom.

[1] The Bloemfontein Conference.

Such was the general situation at the close of Lord Milner's first year of office, which he had devoted, as he proposed, to a minute study of the problem on the spot. During that period he had been the intelligent channel of communication between the Colonial Office and Pretoria in the not unimportant negotiations which were being transacted. Shortly before Lord Milner's appointment the Executive at Pretoria endeavoured to establish its claim to be a sovereign independent State by arrogating to itself the privileges of such a status without directly raising a controversy on the subject of the suzerainty. Petty evasions were attempted of Article IV. of the London Convention of 1884, whereby treaties with foreign Powers had to be submitted to the Imperial Government for approval before ratification. The issue, however, was more directly raised by the passage of the Expulsion of Aliens Act in the summer of 1896 and the Alien Immigration Act of November of the same year. Both of these measures, though obviously within the competence of a sovereign Power, were absolutely inconsistent with Article XIV. of the London Convention, which explicitly laid down that

> All persons other than natives conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic will have full liberty with their families to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic. . . . They will not be subject in respect to their persons or property, or in respect to their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are, or may be, imposed upon citizens of the said Republic.

It is indisputable that a recognition of the right of the Transvaal Government to exclude whom it would from entry into the Transvaal, or to expel any persons it held to be undesirable from its territories, would have rendered this cardinal article of the Convention a dead letter. It was puerile impertinence to contend, as some of the young lions of Pretoria affected to pretend, that the words 'conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic' involved the recognition of laws which prevented immigrants from settling or allowed settlers to be expelled. The laws to which inhabitants were supposed to conform were, of course, the laws binding all inhabitants of the country

without respect to person or nationality. It would no doubt have been possible for the Raad to have passed an Act providing that persons without visible means of subsistence should not be allowed to reside in the Transvaal; but such a law would have led to the immediate expulsion of a large number of *bywoners* and other destitute burghers. In like manner it would have been competent for the Transvaal Government to expel any persons, burghers or aliens, who refused to comply with general laws laid down for the benefit of the country at large; but it was not competent for them to pick and choose, and to make one law for the alien and another law for the burgher. Had the right claimed by Mr. Kruger been acknowledged by the Imperial Government, the latter would have placed in the hands of the former a powerful machine for the extortion of blackmail. The main object, however, of the Pretoria Government was to establish its claim to be considered a sovereign independent State. This is made very evident in a despatch of May 7, 1897, in which Mr. C. van Boeschoten, the Acting State Secretary, vindicated the right of his Government to admit or exclude aliens as it thought fit. He bases his argument entirely upon international law, which is only binding, so far as it is binding at all, between equal and absolutely independent States. The keynote to his long despatch is to be found in the following passage:[1]

> There is no doubt that the Convention must be interpreted according to the generally accepted principles of the law of nations, and that those principles cannot be considered to be set aside without express provision to that effect in the Convention itself. Now, such a provision the Convention does not contain. Now, those principles resting upon common-sense, an element which may not be disregarded in the interpretation of the provisions of Conventions, teach that every State has, and must have, the right to restrain foreign elements which are dangerous for the peace and safety of its inhabitants, for every State has an inherent right of self-defence.

And then the Acting Secretary goes on to quote a large number of authorities upon international law. He placidly ignores the vital distinction between a convention and a treaty entered into between two equal and independent

[1] Blue-book, C. 8721, p. 7.

Powers. The Conventions of 1881 and 1884 simply embodied the conditions upon which Her Majesty Queen Victoria had granted to the South African Republic the right of self-government subject to certain clearly-defined restrictions. These restrictions excluded the Transvaal from the position of an independent sovereign State. It is needless to labour this point, because President Kruger and all who have spoken in his name have demanded the annulment of these Conventions on the specific ground that they deny to the South African Republic the position of a sovereign and independent State. In its controversies, however, with the Colonial Office, the Pretoria Executive always assumed the very proposition which they had to prove.

This rather barefaced effort upon the part of the Republic to ignore its subordinate position was summarily disposed of by Mr. Chamberlain, and for the time being the Transvaal climbed down, but did not abandon its claim to be a sovereign independent State; for it immediately mooted the desirability of an appeal to arbitration, which is a method of settling disputes only applicable to equal and independent Powers. It is necessary to bear these facts carefully in mind, because they dispose of the imputation that the assumption of a directly hostile attitude by the South African Republic was a consequence of, or even was coincident with, the arrival of Lord Milner in South Africa. Dr. Leyds' departure for Europe preceded Lord Milner's arrival in Cape Town. He was furnished with exorbitant funds, quite out of proportion to the needs of a modest agency in Brussels. He moved about from capital to capital, interviewing those who had influence with Continental Cabinets, and distributing gold freely in the editorial offices of the less reputable organs of foreign opinion. Naturally, there is wanting at present direct evidence of the character of Dr. Leyds' transactions. But it is easy to infer, from the scanty evidence which the chance seizure of diplomatic documents has placed at our disposal, that he was endeavouring to enlist, by fair means or by foul, the sympathy and material support of foreign Powers in anticipation of the struggle which he, more than any other man, had good reason for believing to be imminent. There could have

been no other motive for his mission. Whatever views Mr. Kruger might choose to entertain as to his relations with the paramount Power, it is quite certain that neither then nor at a later date was there any doubt upon the subject amongst the statesmen of the Continent. This expedition of Dr. Leyds was coincident with the attempt made at Pretoria to challenge the rights of Great Britain over the Republic and to set aside those articles of the Convention which specifically establish those rights. These initial steps were taken, as I have said, before the appearance of Lord Milner upon the scene. They demonstrated what every practical politician in South Africa already knew, that the hour was at hand for a decision of the question long in dispute — whether Great Britain or the South African Republic should be the paramount Power in South Africa. Everything which happened subsequently was but another step in the same direction. Other issue there could be none, than that one of the two trains travelling along a single line in opposite directions should either seek the refuge of a siding or that there should be sooner or later a collision. It is impossible to believe that even at that time the Transvaal Government was the victim of the delusion that Great Britain would give way. There was not the same ground for certainty on the other side. It was not only Ministers in Downing Street, six thousand miles from the scene of action, nor even colonial statesmen dwelling in Cape Town, who laughed to scorn the idea that Mr. Kruger and his subordinates would pit their strength against the whole might of Great Britain. Loyal colonists dwelling upon the upland, who had spent their whole lives in close intimacy with burghers of the Orange Free State and of the Transvaal, have told me over and over again that they did not for one moment believe that Mr. Kruger would resist pressure when it was duly applied, or that if he did the struggle would last longer than a few weeks or a few months.

All this has to be remembered when we review what is rightly called the unpreparedness of British Ministers for the contest in which they were to be involved. Never, I believe, was a Government better served by its Intelli-

gence Department than was the Imperial Ministry up to the very outbreak of the war. It was, however, impossible for them to know more about the preparedness of the Transvaal for a conflict than was known to loyal and intelligent Dutchmen and to Englishmen who were in daily contact with the Boers. In no country in the world was the employment of spies of less value. No Intelligence officer who had been in South Africa six months would trust the information he received from any Boer source unless he had it in his power to verify the report. In a country of such vast extent, where no man, so to speak, had a neighbour, it was easy to secrete arms, ammunition, and provisions in convenient places without awakening the least suspicion. The slimness of the Dutch character was admirably adapted to further this course. Probably it will never be known how much material was stowed away in hiding-places known only to the most trusted of the Boer Commandants. When we hear so much of the mobility of the Republican troops, we must not forget that a part of it was due to the lightness with which they were enabled to trek from place to place, knowing that they would always find supplies *en route*. This work of accumulating material over so vast an area of country must have extended over a large number of years, and was undoubtedly in full swing when Lord Milner became High Commissioner. Of these facts neither he nor his advisers could be aware, and still less of the belief, and, as events proved, the not unfounded belief, deeply ingrained in Mr. Kruger's mind, that he would ultimately triumph in a struggle with Great Britain. Throughout the two years of diplomatic wrestling between Mr. Kruger and Lord Milner, the advantages were all on the side of the former. He had made up his mind to face the ultimate issue if he failed to attain his objects by diplomatic means. It was, therefore, to his advantage to protract negotiations as long as possible, for it gave him the opportunity of strengthening his resources. He had nothing to lose by mistakes in his diplomacy, for they could only precipitate the combat which he was not anxious to shirk. Blunders on the part of his opponent would have been of great service to him, because they might have

contributed to the success of Dr. Leyds' intrigues in Europe. Lord Milner, on the other hand, started with the sincere and avowed desire of settling the dispute between Great Britain and the Republic on an honourable, friendly, and permanent basis. He knew better than any that the home Ministry was opposed to the re-annexation of the Transvaal, and was genuinely anxious to leave its independence intact. An honestly-administered Republic such as the Orange Free State had been up to the accession of Mr. Steyn to the Presidency, had proved no embarrassment to the paramountcy of Great Britain in South Africa. Nor was there any reason that, under moderately enlightened rule, the Transvaal should prove more of a stumbling-block than the Orange Free State. It is true that the existence of artificial boundaries in a country geographically and economically one tended to arrest the full development of South Africa as a whole. After all, however, the progress of education and the spread of nineteenth-century ideas might be trusted to convince even the Boers of the necessity of a commercial union and a common railway policy throughout the country. What was not tolerable was that the doctrine of Dutch ascendancy should not only be taught in the South African Republic, but should be enforced in so relentless a fashion as to make the position of British subjects in the Republic little better than that of the Kaffirs in British colonies. The influence of what was conveniently called Krugerism was not confined to the South African Republic; it had already permeated the Orange Free State, and was spreading its baneful contagion throughout Cape Colony. It was to the destruction, or at least the limitation of Krugerism that the efforts of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner were directed from the first. It cannot be said that their demands were excessive. They asked from the first, and they were asking at the last, nothing more than is contained in the closing words of the Graaf Reinet speech, which I have already described as marking the turning-point of the South African crisis.[1]

I cannot take it upon myself to say how far Lord Milner

[1] See p. 515.

believed that that genuine and generous appeal would be productive of good results. I only know that he thought himself bound in duty to make it, and to act upon its spirit before having recourse to direct pressure upon the Transvaal. If he entertained in his heart any such hopes, they were very shortly to be dashed to the ground by the results of the elections which took place the following year.

With the knowledge now at our disposal, it would be presumptuous to say that the return of a Progressive majority would have deflected President Kruger from his path. But it is certain, on the other hand, that the temporary triumph of the Afrikander Bond precipitated the rupture. We know from the letters of Dr. Te Water that the Afrikander party in the Republics and in the Cape Colony hailed the establishment of an Afrikander Government at Cape Town as a victory over the Imperial Government. From that time forth—that is, from the day on which Mr. Schreiner, with Messrs. Merriman, Sauer, and Te Water, as principal colleagues, acceded to office—the whole of the negotiations which I have now to follow were foredoomed to failure. In Pretoria the experience of seventeen years had convinced Mr. Kruger and his friends that a British Governor dare not, in his dealings with the Republic, stir beyond the tether given him by his constitutional advisers in Cape Colony. They forgot, as predecessors of Lord Milner had taught them to forget, that the High Commissioner was only limited by the Cape Ministry in his authority over British South Africa in so far as the direct interests of the Cape Colony were concerned. They did not remember, as of late years they had never been reminded, that Cape Colony was only a portion of South Africa, and that it was only in deference to use and wont that the High Commissioner was also Governor of the Cape. We cannot, therefore, blame the authorities of Pretoria overmuch if they jumped to the conclusion that the triumph of the Afrikander Bond in Cape Colony had muzzled and manacled the High Commissioner. To recall once more the words of Sir Henry De Villiers to his brother, the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State. He says, writing on July 31, 1899:[1]

[1] Cd. 369, p. 4.

When I was in the Transvaal three months ago, I found that Reitz and others had the most extraordinary notions of the powers and duties of a Cape Ministry in case of war. They are Ministers of the Crown, and it will be their duty to afford every possible assistance to the British Government. Under normal conditions, a responsible Ministry is perfectly independent in matters of internal concern, but in case of war they are bound to place all the resources of the colony at the disposal of the British Crown; at least, if they did not do so they would be liable to dismissal. The debate which took place in the House of Commons since I last wrote to you satisfies me that the British nation is now determined to settle the Transvaal business in a manner satisfactory to themselves.[1] From an intimate acquaintance with what was going on, I foresaw three months ago that if President Kruger did not voluntarily yield he would be made to do so or else be prepared to meet the whole power of England. I accordingly begged of Kruger's friends to put the matter to him in this way: On the one side there is war with England; on the other side there are concessions which will avoid war or occupation of the country. Now, decide at once how far you will ultimately go; adopt the English five-years franchise; offer it voluntarily to the Uitlanders, make them your friends, be a far-sighted statesman, and you will have a majority of the Uitlanders with you when they become burghers. The answer I got was: We have done too much already, and cannot do more. Yet afterwards they did a great deal more. The same policy of doing nothing except under pressure is still being pursued. The longer the delay the more they will have to yield.

The advice of far-sighted friends was of no avail. Mr. Kruger considered that the establishment of an Afrikander Ministry at Cape Town was a bird in the hand, and he was led to believe that the bird in the bush — viz., a Liberal Government in England — would soon be his, too. At any rate, everything tended to encourage him to juggle as long as he could with negotiations; for the life of the Cape Ministry seemed assured for at least three years, and before that time 'the present team' at Downing Street, so 'unjustly disposed towards us,' might have received their reward, and 'their successors would follow a less hateful policy towards us.'[2]

It is in the light of these facts that the ensuing diplomatic controversy, between Lord Milner and Mr. Chamberlain on the one side and Mr. Kruger and his colleagues on the other, must be studied.

There is, happily, no necessity for me to enter in any detail upon the list of grievances, long as the catalogue of the ships in the 'Iliad,' of which the Uitlanders, mainly British

[1] This was about the time that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman 'saw no reasons for military preparation.'

[2] Dr. Te Water to President Steyn.

subjects, complained. They are set forth in innumerable books upon the subject with which not only students, but the man in the street, may be supposed to be familiar. In Mr. FitzPatrick's 'The Transvaal from Within' and Mr. Bell's 'South African Conspiracy,' in 'The *Times* History of the War,' in Mr. E. T. Cook's 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' in Mr. Bryce's 'Impressions of South Africa,' and in Canon Knox-Little's 'South Africa,' and in almost innumerable other smaller books on the subject, will be found an indictment of the Kruger administration, the truth of which has practically been admitted even by the most determined opponents of the war.

The charter, if so it can be called, of the alien population of the Transvaal after the retrocession of that country by Mr. Gladstone in 1881 is set forth in a passage of the speech with which he wound up the debate on a vote of censure which was moved by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach on January 25, 1881:

> I do not doubt (he said) that we have sacred and solemn duties imposed on us in this matter, both towards the English party whom we call Loyalists, and likewise towards the native tribes of South Africa. This has never for a moment been disguised, but I do not for one moment admit that the course we have taken has involved neglect or disparagement of the interests of the population of the Transvaal. Our duty towards the Loyalists is plain. . . . It is our duty to secure for them that they shall remain in the country on terms of perfect equality with the other inhabitants. Those are our duties to the Loyalists, and we have put these people in such a position that they will no longer have reason to find fault.

Between October 10, 1899, and December 1 of that memorable year, there were naturally many speeches delivered by public men in England on the causes and nature of the war which had broken out in South Africa. They differed in many respects, but they agreed in this, that they all admitted the existence of grievances of a character which could not be tolerated if British subjects in the Republic were to enjoy even a show or pretence of equality with the burghers. Lord Wolseley, who was Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, put the situation in this form:

> The Boers certainly set their faces against us, and things have gone on from bad to worse, until the aspiration now moving them is that they

should rule not only the Transvaal, but that they should rule the whole of South Africa. That is a point which the English people, I think, must keep before them. There is no question about ruling the Transvaal or the Orange Free State. The one great question that has to be fought out between the Dutch in South Africa and the English race is, Which is to be the predominant Power—whether it is to be the Boer Republic or the English Monarchy? Well, if I at all understand and know the people of this nation, I can see but one end to it, and it will be the end that we hope for and have looked for.

Lord Kimberley, the rather reluctant agent of the policy of 'scuttle' in 1881, was, at the moment of making the speech from which I am about to quote, joint leader with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman of what remained of the Liberal party, and was exceedingly frank.

He thought the state of affairs in the Transvaal was intolerable. The Government was exceedingly bad. Look at the tone and spirit of the ultimatum of the Transvaal Government; look at the preparations they had been making for the war. If we had been in difficulty in Europe or Asia, with great calls upon our resources, did anyone suppose that the Transvaal and Orange Free State would have been friendly, or even neutral, neighbours to us in South Africa? The situation was a precarious one in South Africa, because these people were bad neighbours and were armed. . . . Those were the great causes which had been at work, and if they wanted to find the real cause of the war it was in that way they must view this question. The issues about the franchise and about a joint inquiry were only apparent issues. The Transvaal had been a great military power not well disposed towards us. There had been a race struggle in South Africa, in which we secured fair-play for the Dutch at the Cape, and we expected to secure fair-play for the British at the Transvaal. . . . Every independent Power like ourselves had a right to see that justice was done to its subjects wherever they were, and we had that duty imposed upon us in South Africa. The members of the Liberal party should do their very utmost to see that their countrymen enjoyed equal rights. Equal justice to all men had ever been the watchword of the Liberal party, and he maintained that they were fully justified in making demands upon the Transvaal Republic to secure justice and equal rights to our fellow-countrymen.

In the light of subsequent events, Mr. Edmund Robertson's opinion is worth citing:

Far more was involved in the present war than any question between Great Britain and the Transvaal or the peace of South Africa. There was involved the whole existence of the British Empire. He could not contemplate the dreadful consequence of a possible reverse to the South African War. It would be the beginning of the end, not only of the British Empire in South Africa, but as a whole.

And, again, we get another sturdy Radical Nonconformist in the person of Mr. W. S. Robson, M.P.

One must begin at the beginning (he said). The Transvaal, a country as large as England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland put together, was inhabited by two classes of people. One of them, the Boer population, numbered about 67,000 persons. The other class, not very fairly called Uitlanders, numbered some 150,000 persons. By what right was either of these classes there? The Boers were there originally by right of conquest over the natives. The fundamental fact was that the Uitlanders were there by a right as good, no better and no worse, than that of the Boers themselves. . . . Her Majesty handed back the Transvaal on the express condition, to which the Boers themselves assented, that Englishmen of all ranks, that people of all nations and races, should be at full and free liberty to enter that country, reside in it, travel in it, and labour and live in it. Those were the conditions on which the Boers got back their land. That was an essential fact to remember, because a great many persons spoke as though the Uitlanders were like foreigners, with no right whatever on the soil where they were living. That was a complete delusion. The English had as much right in the Transvaal as the Boers. Every Uitlander who by his industry and capital helped to develop the resources of the land was there by a right as good as was Mr. Kruger's. The present issue was whether the nation that was yet to grow up in that part of the world should develop on English lines of freedom and equality or on Boer lines of oppression and corruption. In 1897 the income of the Boer Government was £4,480,000. The Civil Service Salaries Fund alone came to about £2,400,000, enough to pay every man, woman, and child in the Transvaal £40 per head per annum. Where did that money go? The Uitlanders had no voice in disposing of that money, almost all of which they provided. Their judicial independence had also been taken from them. They were denied education for their children, and when they protested against their municipal misgovernment their meeting was broken up. President Kruger had declared war because he wished to maintain race government, than which there was no worse system of tyranny. We did well to protest against that state of things. Our protest had been met with a blow, and in resisting that blow could anyone deny that our cause was just?

And perhaps it may be as well to quote here the opinion of an American missionary in South Africa as expressed in a lecture which appeared in the *Utica Morning Herald* of November 8, 1899. The Rev. Dr. W. A. Bartlett is thus reported:

What are the things in controversy? What was demanded? Why was it commenced? The complaints of the Uitlanders or foreigners are: 1. Taxation without representation. In 1884 Oom Paul invited, through the London papers, all the world to settle in the Transvaal on equal terms with the Boers. As they began to come in, and the diamond and gold mines were discovered, they raised the conditions of the franchise from being simply a white twenty-one years old to a residence of fifteen years and paying 125 dollars, and if a man met these conditions he could be prevented from voting by some matter of detail. 2. Then the trial by jury. The Uitlander demanded to be tried by his peers, and not by a Boer jury. 3. Education. While there were twenty English pupils at Johannesburg to one Boer, they taught the Dutch language in

the schools. As to the municipal taxation, it is practically taken from foreigners, and they have no voice as to how it is to be expended. In Johannesburg, where there are from 60,000 to 100,000 inhabitants, the largest city in the Transvaal, there were 23,000 Uitlanders to 1,000 Boers, and yet their only right of citizenship was to pay taxes and obey any law that a Boer Government, in which they had no representative right, might impose. 4. Slavery. The system of apprenticeship has already been referred to. The first exodus of Boers from Cape Colony was in 1834, when Great Britain abolished slavery in all her colonies, and the Boers resented this infringement of their rights and moved out towards the Transvaal.

Underlying these expressed reasons for the war is the fact that all Boers have been educated into a hatred of the British. Race prejudice has been encouraged. On top of this the Boers sent their ultimatum. On October 10 they informed the British officer at Pretoria that the British must arbitrate under certain conditions and restrictions which they demanded; that they must remove all the troops from the borders of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal which were stationed there to keep the savage tribes away, and remove all troops from the country that had arrived since June 1, and that all troops on their way must be turned back without being permitted to land. This ultimatum must be replied to by October 11 at 5 p.m., or it would be regarded as a declaration of war on the part of the British. Great Britain replied by telegram that it could not consider in any way the ultimatum. The fact is, the Boers had been preparing for war since Jameson's Raid two years previous, filling the country with all munitions of war, including artillery and ammunition. The war was sprung on the British when they were least prepared for it. The question simply resolves itself into this—whether an unprogressive, ignorant, religious people have the right to block the progress of civilization. That they are honest and feel themselves aggrieved, and carry their conscience and religion into this war, we believe; that in many points they are technically right in their diplomatic positions we have no doubt; but the larger question presses, whether a people, ever so good and worthy in many respects, have a right to block the highway which leads to a free, a just, and a noble government by their sixteenth-century ignorance.

We have beside this testimony that of the Commission appointed by the Government of the Transvaal on April 5, 1897, to inquire into the economic conditions connected with our mining industry. It must be remembered that the mining industry, whose economic conditions it was the object of the Commission to investigate, was, excepting agriculture, practically the only industry in the Transvaal. From its products the Executive of the South African Republic derived their swollen revenue, out of which they paid for their bloated armaments. The names of the Commissioners bear testimony to their fidelity to the Republican cause, and their testimony must be accepted at least by those who hold briefs for the Boers. Mr. Schalk Burger, who is at this moment Acting President *vice* Mr. Kruger, self-exiled,

was chairman. The other members were C. J. Joubert, J. S. Smit, Thomas Hugo, J. F. de Beer, and Schmitz-Dumont. They begin their report by clearing the much-abused capitalists of many of the imputations passed upon them, especially in this country.

For various reasons (they say)[1] some mines have temporarily ceased operations. The cause of so many mines not paying dividends is primarily to be ascribed to the high cost of production. There are various other causes that have contributed to the existing condition of things; but where mistakes have been made in the past, your Commission is pleased to state that at present there exist all the indications of a pure administration, and the State as well as the mining industry must be congratulated upon the fact that most of the mines are controlled and engineered by financial and practical men, who are devoting their time, energy, skill, and knowledge to the interest of the mining industry, and who have not only introduced the latest machinery and mining appliances, but also the greatest perfection of method and process known to science. But for these a good many of the mines now producing gold would not have reached that stage.

The question to be solved, they say,[2] is:

What must be done to reduce the costs of production so as to leave a moderate margin of profit upon the article produced? and this is a problem apart from any complications as between Government and nationalities. . . . Your Commission entirely disapprove of the concessions through which the industrial prosperity of the country is hampered. Such might have been expedient in the past, but the country has arrived at a stage of development that will only admit of free competition according to Republican principles. This applies more especially to the gold industry, that has to face its own economical problems without being further burdened with concessions that are irksome and injurious to the industry, and will always remain a source of irritation and dissatisfaction.

It is a commonplace of pro-Boer speakers and writers to dwell upon the high rate of wages paid to white miners in South Africa under the Kruger régime, and to contrast it unfavourably with the pittance earned by the labourer at home. On this subject the Commission reports:[3]

Judging superficially, and taking into consideration the wages paid by the companies in other parts of the world and the evidence on the subject submitted to your Commission, it would appear as if wages paid here are too high; but taking all the circumstances into consideration, the contrary is apparent.

It must be taken as a fact that no *skilled* labourer can or will work for a salary or wage less than will enable him to support himself and his family.

According to evidence, a miner earns £18 to £30 per month, accord-

[1] C. 9345, p. 2. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 3. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

ing to ability, and your Commission are of opinion these wages are not excessive, regard being given to the high cost of living at the mines; in fact, they are only sufficient to satisfy daily wants, and consequently it cannot be expected that white labourers will establish their permanent abode in this Republic unless conditions are made by which their position will be ameliorated.

Another point on which Mr. Kruger's apologists lay great stress is the excellence of the Liquor Laws as applied to the sale of intoxicants to native labourers. The point of a law, like that of a story, lies in its application. The following is the comment of the Commission:[1]

It has been proved to your Commission that the Liquor Law, No. 17, 1896, is not carried out properly, and that the mining industry has real grievances in connection therewith, owing to the illicit sale of strong drink to the natives at the mines, and they wish specially and strongly to insist that the stipulations of Article 16 of the law shall be strictly carried out. The evidence given on this point proves a miserable state of affairs, and a much stronger application of the law is required.

That the Commission was by no means disposed to deal harshly with the 'trade' is proved by their treatment of an instance which they quote:

Article 17 of the law (they say) stipulates that four licenses will be granted for a population of 500 persons, and for every additional 400 only one more license. (Under this Article is meant 500 male persons over sixteen years of age.)

There would be no objection against such a stipulation, as such is more or less the system in other civilized countries, but such a stipulation ought to have been initiated when the towns and villages close to the mines were originally established. It appears from statistics submitted that at present there are in Johannesburg the following licensed liquor dealers:

(*a*) Wholesale licenses	49
(*b*) Bottle stores	56
(*c*) Canteens (bars)	305
(*d*) Roadside inns	5
(*e*) Beer-halls	23
Total	438

Letter (*c*) includes 112 hotel licenses.

Supposing that Article 17 were to be strictly applied, and assuming that Johannesburg and neighbouring mines have a male population over sixteen years of age of 35,500, the Licensing Board can only issue 88 licenses, and 350 licenses will have to be refused.

From a financial point of view, this would entail very serious consequences for the State, because the liquor licenses and the large amount paid for import duties on liquor, which form a large portion of the revenue of the State, might then be considerably diminished. But leaving this

[1] C. 9345, p. 5.

out of the question, and assuming that the Government will put up with this loss, trade would be seriously affected by the closing of 350 places of business, and large numbers of people who are interested in the trade and who have invested their entire capital in the liquor business, under the law then existing, would be entirely ruined.

Dealing with transit duty, the Commission reports that 'these duties are unfair, and ought to be abolished.'

With regard to import duties, they say: 'With reference to this matter, your Commission can only recommend that, if possible, food-stuffs ought to be entirely free from taxation, as at the present moment it is impossible to supply the population of the Republic from the products of local agriculture, and consequently importation is absolutely necessary.'

With regard to explosives, which to a mining community stand in the same relation as agricultural implements stand to the farmer, the Commission placed on record the very unfavourable judgment they formed of the system in vogue in the Transvaal. Under the heading of 'Explosives'[1] they state:

Before entering on this subject, we wish to put on record our disappointment with the evidence tendered on behalf of the South African Explosives Company, Limited,

which I may remark, in passing, is the particular monopoly to which Mr. Kruger so often referred as being the cornerstone of Republican independence.

We expected (they continue), and we think not unreasonably, that they (the company) would be able to give reliable information for our guidance respecting the cost of importation as well as of local manufacture of the principal explosives used for mining purposes; but though persistently questioned on these points, few facts were elicited, and, we regret to say, they entirely failed to satisfy us in this important respect. . . . The advantages which the Government intended to confer to (*sic*) the country by establishing a new industry here have not been realized, whilst the monopoly has proved a serious burden on the mining industry. That the principal explosives used here (blasting gelatine, and, to a small extent, dynamite) can be purchased in Europe and delivered here at a price far below the present cost to the mines has been proved to us by the evidence of many witnesses competent to speak on the subject; and when we bear in mind that the excess charge of 40s. to 45s. per case sold does not benefit the State, but serves to enrich individuals for the most part resident in Europe, the injustice of such a tax on the staple industry becomes more apparent and demands immediate removal.

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 7.

It is in evidence that the South African Republic is one of the largest, if not the largest, consumers of explosives in the world, and, following the rule of commerce in such cases, it is reasonable to suppose that the most advantageous terms would be secured for so large a consumer, which, no doubt, would be the case were it not for the monopoly now in the hands of the South African Explosives Company, whereby they and their friends make enormous profits at the expense of the mining industry.

These profits have been estimated by the Volksraad Dynamite Commission at no less than £580,000 for the years 1897 and 1898, being £2 per case on 290,000 cases, the number which it is estimated will have to be imported to meet the demands for those years. . . . This explosive, whether costing 23s. 6d. or 29s. 6d. in Hamburg, is supplied to the mines at 85s. per case, showing a profit of 47s. 6d. in one case and 41s. 6d. in the other, of which the Government receives 5s. per case. . . .

The mining industry has thus to bear a burden which does not enrich the State or bring any benefit in return, and this fact must always prove a source of irritation and annoyance to those who, while willing to contribute to just taxation for the general good, cannot acquiesce in an impost of the nature complained of. . . .

The desirability of establishing industries of all kinds within the Republic cannot for a moment be doubted; but when it is proposed to establish an artificial industry, whose only hope of success lies in the extension to which it may be allowed to unduly profit from, instead of benefiting a natural and more important enterprise, the economic fallacy of the proposition becomes sufficiently clear to need little further demonstration.

In connection with the railways:

Your Commission have followed with great attention and interest the evidence and statistics submitted on this point. From these it appears that not only are the tariffs charged by the N.Z.A.S.M. Company such that by reduction of the same the industry would be considerably benefited, but that such a reduction would not only be fair, but carry with them, as a natural consequence, that the neighbouring States and colonies would have to reduce their tariffs considerably. It does not lie within the scope of the labours of this Commission to enter into the application of the tariffs at present existing and charged by the N.Z.A.S.M., because this would require a technical knowledge of railway matters, about which your Commission had neither the power nor opportunity to gain information.[1]

With regard to the efficiency of police administration in Johannesburg, the Commission indirectly makes some interesting reflections:[2]

According to the evidence submitted to your Commission, gold thefts are on the increase; and although the Volksraad has given the matter their favourable consideration, and have, at the instance of the mining

[1] That information, denied to the Commission, can be gleaned from Mr. Fitz-Patrick's quotation, 'The Transvaal from Within,' or from the edifying report of the Concessions Commission, presided over by the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton.

[2] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 11.

industries, so amended the Gold Law as to provide for the punishment for the sale and for being in possession of raw gold, still, it has been stated to your Commission in evidence that the gold thefts amount to about 10 per cent. of the output, equivalent to an amount of £750,000 per annum.

It follows that the administration of the law must be faulty, because there are only very few instances where the crime has been detected and punished. If those figures are not exaggerated, and your Commission have no reason to suppose so, then this matter deserves the serious consideration of the Government. The suppression of this crime can be considered as a real saving to the industry, and this amount of three-quarters of a million would, especially in times of depression, exercise a large influence on the yield and financial position of the mines.

The industry asks that the penal clauses regarding this matter shall be eliminated from the Gold Law, and that a separate law be passed, more or less on the basis of the I.D.B. law of Kimberley, Cape Colony, and that measures should be taken by which the injured parties shall be unable (enabled ?) to exercise control and have supervision over any department to be established for the detection and suppression of thefts of raw gold.

Your Commission are of the opinion that the Government could grant this request without injuring their dignity on the basis hereafter mentioned; on the contrary, it would remove the blame from the present administration—viz., that these thefts can practically be carried on with impunity.

The closing remarks of the Commission are worth giving *in extenso*:[1]

Before closing this report, your Commission must express their satisfaction with the way witnesses have responded to the Commission's invitations.

It would be invidious to particularize where there are so many who, at a great sacrifice of time, have devoted themselves to a careful compilation of facts and figures, than which no such interesting or exhaustive statements of the local mining industry have ever been laid before the public. At the request of your Commission, representatives from Barberton and Klerksdorp came to Pretoria to give evidence, and the public spirit displayed by those gentlemen in coming all the distance to represent the interests of their respective communities deserves the greatest praise. It must be mentioned here that the interests of the aforesaid mining communities are identical to those of the Witwatersrand Goldfields, and any benefits resulting from this inquiry will necessarily extend to those fields.

Your Commission respectfully suggest that for the purposes of general reference, and to be placed in the official archives, this report with all the evidence led (?), statistics, and further addenda be printed and published in book form. It will also serve a useful purpose in illustrating to foreign investors the conditions under which the mines exist and are worked, the richness of the reefs, and the regularity of the ore deposits. Credit will be restored, as it will be obvious to all who take an interest in the matter that the bogus companies mostly floated in Europe by unscrupulous promoters do not come within the pale of legitimate enterprise connected

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 13.

with the mining industry. The establishment of a Local Mining Board has been strongly urged by witnesses.

From an industrial and commercial point of view this country must be considered as still in its infancy, and without loss of dignity and prestige the Government may accede to the above request.

Experience in these matters can only be attained after the lapse of long years, and by coming in contact with experts from other countries the State will reap the benefit of the knowledge obtained in their country, where these problems have for decades exercised the minds of their leading citizens. In conclusion, your Commission fervently hope that they truly and faithfully interpreted the object of the inquiry, and that their suggestions and recommendations, if acted upon, will confer a lasting benefit on

LAND EN VOLK.

Now, limiting, for the sake of argument, the grievances of the Uitlander in the Transvaal to those frankly acknowledged by this committee of burghers, let us see what they amount to. In the first place, we find that capitalists specifically invited to exploit the wealth of the Transvaal were so tied and bound by the fetters of iniquitous monopolies that comparatively few of the companies were able to earn a dividend. We find, in the second place, that, on the showing of the committee, this unproductiveness of capital was due neither to natural causes nor to over-capitalization, nor, again, to lack of skill, energy, and enterprise on the part of the managers of the mines, but was attributable to concessions made to foreigners. These concessions, while they crippled the capitalist, in no way promoted the welfare of the country which granted them. Expenditure, however profligate, upon the internal improvement and development yields some good result in the long-run; but the devotion of national revenue to the satisfaction of the greed of foreigners without any interest in the country is beyond justification. Again, we find, as a contributory restriction upon the profitable employment of capital, a rate of wages which, though relatively extremely high, did not suffice to enable the miner to maintain a family in the country in which he was employed. This fact, again, was due, not to natural causes, but to the imposition of extravagant import duties, and to the extortionate tariff charged for freight by a company almost exclusively composed of non-residents. We find, moreover, such maladministration of the law that the Kaffir, in spite of the strictest legislation, was allowed to debauch himself with

drink of the most poisonous kind vended by illicit dealers—again for the profit of outsiders. Further, it is admitted that so ineffective was the police system that a sum of money representing a sixth of the total revenue of the Republic was annually abstracted by gold thieves from the mines, and that no detection or punishment followed the crime.

Of course, I am not in this category including all the grievances, which were many and intolerable, to which the Uitlanders were exposed under the Kruger régime. These alone, confessed to by the Commission, were far greater than those which induced our forefathers to rebel against Charles I. and the North American colonies to throw off the yoke of England. It may be said that monopolies as iniquitous and an economic system as blundering has been known in other countries. It would suffice to reply that, wherever such evils have reached such a pitch, constitutional agitation or open rebellion has secured a remedy; but history will be searched in vain for a parallel to the situation in the Transvaal. The injuries complained of were inflicted by the less intelligent minority upon the infinitely more intelligent majority. Europeans, the descendants of men who owed whatever they knew of freedom and liberty to the love of independence inherent in the British race, imposed upon other Europeans brought up in the atmosphere of free institutions such ignominious terms of living as the native Princes of India first imposed upon the handful of European traders which settled on their coasts. The men who contributed nine-tenths of the wealth of the Boer Exchequer had neither directly nor indirectly a voice in its collection or its allocation. They had just as much and just as little control over the wealth which they extracted from the soil as had the mechanical contrivances by which the gold was obtained. The Uitlanders had tried constitutional agitation, and it had failed; they had had recourse to revolution, and the result was something worse than failure. There was nothing left to them but an appeal to the Paramount Power for such protection as that Power afforded to members of the Dutch race in the British colonies.

When Lord Milner arrived in South Africa, matters were not mending, but retrograding, and the coincidence of his

arrival with the investigations of the Transvaal Commission, which produced absolutely nothing but the report from which I have quoted, is the answer to the charge that he was responsible for the war. The disease with which he had to deal required no elaborate diagnosis; there was little or no doubt as to its origin or its nature, and there was none whatever as to the certain and fatal consequences if it were allowed to pursue its course unchecked. There was not, however, the same unanimity as to the proper methods of treatment. Was it a case for the physician or for the surgeon? It cannot be asserted that Lord Milner had recourse to the knife before he had exercised all the resources of the Pharmacopœia. I have set forth his endeavours to arrest the ravages of the disease by indirect treatment. His first object was to repair the diseased tissue of the Transvaal by strengthening, as it were, the tissue identical in fibre and texture which was found in the British colonies. It is well known that health will communicate itself as well as disease. If it were possible by tonic and judicious nutriment to improve the tone of the Dutch population in the colonies, it was at least conceivable that health thus produced might communicate itself to the Dutch inhabitants of the Republics. Lord Milner tried that experiment. Not only did the case not respond to treatment, but the reverse of what was desired actually occurred. The malignant tissues infected the healthier, and not the healthier the malignant. The mischief was not mitigated in the Republics; it spread with alarming rapidity through the colony. The crisis arrived when the Afrikander Bond succeeded in capturing a majority in the Cape Parliament. From that moment all hope of effecting a cure by the aid of Dutch influence from within passed away. The triumph of the Afrikander Bond seemed to indicate to the Dutch from the Zambesi to Cape Agulhas that the foreign yoke was about to be broken once and for all. There was yet another expedient of still more dubious promise which was at the disposal of the physician before he invoked the aid of the surgeon. Indirect treatment had failed; direct remedies might yet succeed. It was not an encouraging prospect, but no one can deny that Lord Milner devoted himself to the last therapeutic resource left him with as much

energy as if he were confident of success. From the day of the installation of the Schreiner Ministry, a pressure—kindly, friendly, but firm—was applied from Government House in Cape Town to Government House in Pretoria. There was no change of object; when Lord Milner was addressing the stubborn Executive of the South African Republic, he was seeking exactly the same end as when in the Graaff Reinet speech he bade the Dutch colonists 'use all their influence, not in confirming the Transvaal in unjustified suspicions, not in encouraging its Government in obstinate resistance to all reform, but in inducing it gradually to assimilate its institutions, and, what is even more important than institutions, the temper and spirit of its administration, to those of the free communities of South Africa, such as this colony or the Orange Free State. That is the direction in which a peaceful way out of these inveterate troubles which have now plagued this country for more than thirty years is to be found.'

Lord Milner's influence had already made itself felt amongst the Uitlanders of Johannesburg. They had tried the expedients at their disposal with lamentable results, and they were now prepared to co-operate with the High Commissioner in applying judicious and constitutional pressure to the Government of Pretoria. Before setting forth the objects of what may be called the second Reform Movement in Johannesburg, which are embodied in the petition addressed to the Queen by over 20,000 Uitlanders, it is desirable to call attention to a document which throws light upon the attitude of Afrikanders generally in the coming struggle. A month before the drafting of the address to the Queen, the *Cape Times* of February 22, 1899, contained a statement to which Lord Milner directed the attention of Mr. Chamberlain 'as indicating views which I find are being expressed more or less openly in a certain section of the press, both in this colony and in the Transvaal.'[1]

A remarkable movement (says the *Cape Times*) is observable amongst the extreme anti-British organs in the Colony and the Transvaal, having for its object the active support of the Transvaal in its defiance of the Imperial Government. The crusade appears to have had its genesis in the following letter to the *Stellalander*, published at Vryburg:

'The *Cape Times* has just drawn up a programme of active work for

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 182.

the (South African) League. It is high time that the Afrikanders of English as well as of Dutch descent should no longer act merely on the defensive, but also on the offensive, and that organizations like the Afrikander Bond, the Nationale Vereeniging of Johannesburg, etc., should be established with a programme, actively to be carried out on the following lines:

'(*a*) That the Transvaal has the right to demand that it should be placed with regard to its connection to British rule in exactly the same position as it was previous to the unfortunate annexation.

'(*b*) That it has the right to demand that Mr. Chamberlain should withdraw his unjustifiable and presumptuous claims of suzerainty.

'(*c*) That it has the right to refer all disputed questions to arbitration, even while the London Convention remains in force.

'(*d*) That it be no longer threatened and insulted by British troops being stationed on its frontiers; and

'(*e*) That so long as the above demands are not acceded to unconditionally, nobody must expect it to take any notice of complaints by British subjects resident in the Transvaal.'

The letter, which is signed 'Afrikanus,' concludes as follows:

'These demands must be put forth energetically, and if the British Government pays no heed, then the advisability must be discussed of boycotting all English ships, English merchants, banks, assurance companies, etc. . . .'

The above letter also appears in the *Rand Post*, and the editor remarks, after sketching from his point of view the policy of England: 'In the coming struggle the moral support of all Afrikanders is worth much. Let Afrikanders consequently set all trivial differences aside, let them stop speaking about small, general, individual grievances against the Transvaal Government, and let them band themselves together in every village in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, in the Cape Colony, and in the Dutch districts of Natal, and establish a bond or union, the only and sole item of whose programme must be 'Right for the Transvaal.' The suggestion of boycotting English trade in all its branches is warmly supported. 'No gold-fields,' it proceeds, 'to the value of millions must in future be allotted to English companies, but must be exploited by the State itself for the benefit of the Afrikanders. There should be no free and private townships then, but only villages on Government stands; no free importations, but gradually more and more judicious support given to local industries; a cable service of our own, and no longer £100,000 paid annually for cables over the English cables; our own line of steamers, and no longer the Donald Currie money-making concern. In this manner we will retaliate in such an effective manner that the British Government will probably give in. This policy recommends itself, and every inhabitant of South Africa can support it by word and deed. In anticipation of the time when the struggle must be decided by force of arms, the above is the best policy during the time of peace.'

Now this, it must be remembered, was published a month before the address to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, signed by

21,684 British subjects, was forwarded to the High Commissioner for presentation. It ran as follows :[1]

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDENT ON THE WITWATERSRAND, SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA.

SHOWETH that—

1. For a number of years, prior to 1896, considerable discontent existed among the Uitlander population of the South African Republic, caused by the manner in which the government of the country was being conducted. The great majority of the Uitlander population consists of British subjects.

2. It was, and is, notorious that the Uitlanders have no share in the government of the country, although they constitute an absolute majority of the inhabitants of this State, possess a very large proportion of the land, and represent the intellect, wealth, and energy of the State.

3. The feelings of intense irritation which have been aroused by this state of things have been aggravated by the manner in which remonstrances have been met. Hopes have been held out and promises have been made by the Government of this State from time to time, but no practical amelioration of the conditions of life has resulted.

4. Petitions, signed by large numbers of Your Majesty's subjects, have been repeatedly addressed to the Government of this State, but have failed of their effect, and have even been scornfully rejected.

5. At the end of 1895 the discontent culminated in an armed insurrection against the Government of this State, which, however, failed of its object.

6. On that occasion the people of Johannesburg placed themselves unreservedly in the hands of Your Majesty's High Commissioner, in the fullest confidence that he would see justice done to them.

7. On that occasion, also, President Kruger published a proclamation, in which he again held out hopes of substantial reforms.

8. Instead, however, of the admitted grievances being redressed, the spirit of the legislation adopted by the Volksraad during the past few years has been of a most unfriendly character, and has made the position of the Uitlander more irksome than before.

9. In proof of the above statement, Your Majesty's petitioners would humbly refer to such measures as the following :

The Immigration of Aliens Act (Law 30 of 1896).
The Press Law (Law 26 of 1896).
The Aliens Expulsion Law of 1896.

Of these, the first was withdrawn at the instance of Your Majesty's Government, as being an infringement of the London Convention of 1884.

By the second the President is invested with the powers of suppressing wholly, or for a stated time, any publication which, in his individual opinion, is opposed to good manners or subversive of order. This despotic power he has not hesitated to exercise towards newspapers which support British interests, while newspapers which support the Government have been allowed to publish inflammatory and libellous articles, and to advocate atrocious crimes without interference.

The Aliens Expulsion Act draws a distinction between the burghers of

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 185.

the State and Uitlanders which, Your Majesty's petitioners humbly submit, is in conflict with the Convention of 1884. Thus, whilst burghers of the State are protected from expulsion, British subjects can be put over the border at the will of the President, without the right of appealing to the High Court, which is, nevertheless, open to the offending burgher. This law was repealed, only to be re-enacted in all its essential provisions during the last session of the Volksraad.

10. The promise made by the President with regard to conferring municipal government upon Johannesburg was to outward appearance kept; but it is an ineffective measure, conferring small benefit upon the community, and investing the inhabitants with but little additional power of legislating for their own municipal affairs. Of the two members to be elected for each ward, one at least must be a burgher. Besides this, the Burgomaster is appointed by the Government, not elected by the people. The Burgomaster has a casting-vote, and, considering himself a representative of the Government, and not of the people, has not hesitated to oppose his will to the unanimous vote of the Councillors. The Government also possess the right to veto any resolution of the Council. As the burghers resident in Johannesburg were estimated at the last census as 1,039 in number, as against 23,503 Uitlanders, and as they belong to the poorest and most ignorant class, it is manifest that these burghers have an undue share in the representation of the town, and are invested with a power which neutralizes the efforts of the larger and more intelligent portion of the community. Every burgher resident is qualified to vote, irrespective of being a ratepayer or property-owner within the municipal area.

11. Notwithstanding the evident desire of the Government to legislate solely in the interests of the burghers, and impose undue burdens on the Uitlanders, there was still a hope that the declaration of the President on December 30, 1896, had some meaning, and that the Government would duly consider grievances properly brought before its notice. Accordingly, in the early part of 1897 steps were taken to bring to the notice of the Government the alarming depression in the mining industry, and the reasons which, in the opinions of men well qualified to judge, had led up to it.

12. The Government at last appointed a Commission, consisting of its own officials, which was empowered to inquire into the industrial conditions of the mining population, and to suggest such a scheme for the removal of existing grievances as might seem advisable and necessary.

13. On August 5 the Commission issued their report, in which the reasons for the then state of depression were fully set forth, and many reforms were recommended as necessary for the well-being of the community. Among them it will be sufficient to mention the appointment of an Industrial Board, having its seat in Johannesburg, for the special supervision of the Liquor Law and the Pass Law, and to combat the illicit dealing in gold and amalgam.

14. The Government refused to accede to the report of the Commission, which was a standing indictment against its administration in the past, but referred the question to the Volksraad, which in turn referred it to a select committee of its own members. The result created consternation in Johannesburg; for, whilst abating in some trifling respects burdens which bore heavily on the mining industry, the Committee of the Raad, ignoring the main recommendations of the Commission, actually advised an increased taxation of the country, and that in a way which bore most heavily on the Uitlander. The suggestions of the Committee were at once adopted, and the tariff increased accordingly.

15. At the beginning of 1897 the Government went a step further in their aggressive policy towards the Uitlander, and attacked the independence of the High Court, which until then Your Majesty's subjects had regarded as the sole remaining safeguard of their civil rights. Early in that year Act No. 1 was rushed through the Volksraad with indecent haste. This high-handed Act was not allowed to pass without criticism; but the Government, deaf to all remonstrance, threatened reprisals on those professional men who raised their voices in protest, and finally, on February 16, 1898, dismissed the Chief Justice, Mr. J. G. Kotze, for maintaining his opinions. His place was filled shortly afterwards by Mr. Gregorowski, the Judge who had been especially brought from the Orange Free State to preside over the trial of the Reform prisoners in 1896, and who, after passing of the Act above referred to, had expressed an opinion that no man of self-respect would sit on the bench whilst that law remained on the Statute Book of the Republic. All the Judges at the time this law was passed condemned it in a formal protest, publicly read by the Chief Justice in the High Court, as a gross interference with the independence of that tribunal. That protest has never been modified or retracted, and of the five Judges who signed the declaration three still sit on the bench.

16. The hostile attitude of the Government towards Your Majesty's subjects has been accentuated by the building of forts, not only around Pretoria, but also overlooking Johannesburg. The existence of these forts is a source of constant menace and irritation to British subjects, and does much to keep alive that race feeling which the Government of this State professes to deprecate. This feeling of hostility has infected the general body of burghers. Most noticeable is the antagonistic demeanour of the police and the officials under whom they immediately act.

17. The constitution and personnel of the police force is one of the standing menaces to the peace of Johannesburg. It has already been the subject of remonstrance to the Government of this Republic, but hitherto without avail. An efficient police force cannot be drawn from a people such as the burghers of this State; nevertheless, the Government refuses to open its ranks to any other class of the community. As a consequence, the safety of the lives and property of the inhabitants is confided in a large measure to the care of men fresh from the country districts, who are unaccustomed to town life and ignorant of the ways and requirements of the people. When it is considered that this police force is armed with revolvers in addition to the ordinary police truncheons, it is not surprising that, instead of a defence, they are an absolute danger to the community at large.

17*a*. Trial by jury exists in name, but the jurors are selected exclusively from among the burghers. Consequently in any case where there is the least possibility of race or class interests being involved there is the gravest reason to expect a miscarriage of justice.

18. Encouraged and abetted by the example of their superior officers, the police have become lately more aggressive than ever in their attitude towards British subjects. As, however, remonstrances and appeals to the Government were useless, the indignities to which Your Majesty's subjects were daily exposed from this source had to be endured as best they might. Public indignation was at length fully aroused by the death at the hands of a police constable of a British subject named Tom Jackson Edgar.

19. The circumstances of this affair were bad enough in themselves, but were accentuated by the action of the Public Prosecutor, who, although the accused was charged with murder, on his own initiative

reduced the charge to that of culpable homicide only, and released the prisoner on the recognisances of his comrades in the police force, the bail being fixed originally at £200, or less than the amount which is commonly demanded for offences under the Liquor Law, or for charges of common assault.

20. This conduct of a high State official caused the most intense feeling to prevail in Johannesburg. It was then thought that the time had arrived to take some steps whereby British subjects might for the future be protected from the indignities of which they had so long complained. It was therefore decided to make an appeal direct to Your Most Gracious Majesty, setting forth the grievances under which Your Majesty's subjects labour. A petition was accordingly prepared and presented to Your Majesty's Vice-Consul on December 24, 1898, by some 4,000 or 5,000 British subjects. The behaviour of those present was orderly and quiet, and everything was done to prevent any infringement of the Public Meetings Law.

21. Owing to a technical informality, Your Majesty's representative declined to transmit the petition to Your Majesty.

22. Immediately it became known that the petition would not go forward to Your Majesty, the Government ordered the arrest of Messrs. Clement Davies Webb and Thomas Robery Dodd, respectively the Vice-President and Secretary of the Transvaal Province of the South African League, under whose auspices the petition had been presented, on a charge of contravening the Public Meetings Act by convening a meeting in the open air. They were admitted to bail of £1,000 each, five times the amount required from the man charged with culpable homicide.

23. Thereupon Your Majesty's subjects, considering the arrest of these two gentlemen a gross violation of the rights of British subjects, and an attempt to strain unduly against them a law which had already been represented to the Government as pressing most heavily upon the Uitlander population, decided to call a public meeting in an enclosed place, as permitted by the law, for the purpose of ventilating their grievances and endorsing a fresh petition to Your Majesty.

24. Prior to holding the meeting the South African League ascertained from the Government, through the State Attorney, that, as in their opinion the meeting was perfectly legal in its objects, the Government had no intention of prohibiting it.

25. The meeting took place on January 14, 1899, at the Amphitheatre, a large iron building capable of holding from 3,000 to 4,000 people. Prior to the advertised hour of opening an overwhelmingly large body of Boers, many of whom were police in plain clothes and other employés of the Government, forced an entrance by a side-door, and practically took complete possession of the building. They were all more or less armed, some with sticks, some with police batons, some with iron bars, and some with revolvers.

26. The mere appearance of the speakers was the signal for disorder to commence. The Boers would not allow the meeting to proceed, but at once commenced to wreck the place, break up the chairs, and utilize the broken portions of them as weapons of offence against any single unarmed Englishmen they could find.

27. There were present several Government officials, justices of the peace, and lieutenants of police in uniform, and the Commandant of Police; but they were appealed to in vain, and the work of destruction proceeded apparently with their concurrence. Several Englishmen were severely injured by the attacks of the rioters, but in no case was an arrest effected, although offenders were pointed out and their arrest demanded, nor, indeed, was any attempt made by the police to quell the riot. Up to

the present time no steps have been taken by the Government towards prosecuting the ringleaders of the disturbance, nor has a single arrest been made, notwithstanding the fact that the police officials who were present at the meeting admitted that some of the rioters were well known to them.

28. Those of Your Majesty's subjects who were present at the meeting were unarmed and defenceless, and seeing that the rioters had the support of the police and of some of the higher officials of the State, they refrained from any attempt at retaliation, preferring to rely upon more constitutional methods, and to lay a full statement of their grievances before Your Most Gracious Majesty.

29. The condition of Your Majesty's subjects in this State has, indeed, become well-nigh intolerable.

30. The acknowledged and admitted grievances of which Your Majesty's subjects complain prior to 1895 not only are not redressed, but exist to-day in an aggravated form. They are still deprived of all political rights; they are denied any voice in the government of the country; they are taxed far above the requirements of the country, the revenue of which is misapplied and devoted to objects which keep alive a continuous and well-founded feeling of irritation, without in any way advancing the general interest of the State. Maladministration and peculation of public moneys go hand-in-hand, without any vigorous measures being adopted to put a stop to the scandal. The education of Uitlander children is made subject to impossible conditions. The police afford no adequate protection to the lives and property of the inhabitants of Johannesburg; they are rather a source of danger to the peace and safety of the Uitlander population.

31. A further grievance has become prominent since the beginning of the year. The power vested in the Government by means of the Public Meetings Act has been a menace to Your Majesty's subjects since the enactment of the Act in 1894. This power has now been applied in order to deliver a blow that strikes at the inherent and inalienable birthright of every British subject, namely, his right to petition his Sovereign. Straining to the utmost the language and intention of the law, the Government have arrested two British subjects who assisted in presenting a petition to Your Majesty on behalf of 4,000 fellow-subjects. Not content with this, the Government, when Your Majesty's loyal subjects again attempted to lay their grievances before Your Majesty, permitted their meeting to be broken up, and the objects of it to be defeated by a body of Boers organized by Government officials, and acting under the protection of the police. By reason, therefore, of the direct, as well as the indirect, act of the Government, Your Majesty's loyal subjects have been prevented from publicly ventilating their grievances, and from laying them before Your Majesty.

32. Wherefore Your Majesty's humble petitioners humbly beseech Your Most Gracious Majesty to extend Your Majesty's protection to Your Majesty's loyal subjects resident in this State, and to cause an inquiry to be made into grievances and complaints enumerated and set forth in this humble petition, and to direct Your Majesty's Representative in South Africa to take measures which will secure the speedy reform of the abuses complained of, and to obtain substantial guarantees from the Government of this State for a recognition of their rights as British subjects.

And Your Most Gracious Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc.

W. WYBERGH, etc., P.O. Box 317, Johannesburg,
South African Republic.
(And others.)

This address to Her Majesty may be described as the Petition of Rights of the Uitlanders of the Transvaal. Attempts have been made on behalf of the South African Republic to throw discredit upon the petition on account of the alleged manufacture and fabrication of signatures. It is quite possible that in lists of such magnitude names should appear of persons who have not really signed, or even who are non-existent, especially as it was to the interest of the Transvaal Executive that the petition should be discredited. But, on the other hand, the organizers of the petition were well aware of the proneness of Boer agents to this form of intrigue, and took the greatest precautions to prevent the acceptance of any signatures about the genuineness of which there could be any doubt. And it is quite certain that over 20,000 of the signatures represent adult males who voluntarily signed the document in question. But, after all, the question of the genuineness of a few or even of many signatures is quite unimportant beside the graver question whether or not the grievances set forth actually existed, and whether they were such as to demand the intervention of the paramount Power. To that question there has been no reply, except that a sovereign independent State is entitled to treat those resident within its borders as it thinks fit.

On March 17, 1899, President Kruger addressed a meeting of burghers at Rustenburg, in which he made a declaration of policy. In the course of that speech, the President referred, amongst other topics, to the Franchise Question. He practically admitted that the present law excluded aliens who wished to become burghers from obtaining the franchise until fourteen years after their first intimation of their desire. And even if they divested themselves of their allegiance to the country of their birth and served a period as long as that which Jacob served to win Rachel as his wife, their admittance to full citizenship depended upon the approval of two-thirds of the burghers of the ward in which they happened to be domiciled. The only alteration which he suggested was to reduce the period by five years. To use his own words, as given in the authorized edition of his speech, he said[1]

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 198.

he would leave the first four years mentioned for naturalization, and reduce the remainder of the period for the attainment of full burgher rights to five years. He calculated that in this way they would have about 70,000 burghers and the time would probably come when they could still further reduce the period like other countries. He could not do so at present, as their case was different. Those countries had millions of burghers, and there was no danger in letting the aliens come in with comparative freedom. They could not do this at once, but they might achieve it by degrees. He desired to regulate it. He wished to show the world that he was anxious to meet the alien in this matter. *Of course, it would have to come before the Raad, and two-thirds of the burghers had to signify their consent.*

It is hardly necessary to point out that a contingent franchise of this sort was of no value to anyone. The great mass of burghers in the Transvaal were avowedly opposed to progressive ideas and to all that is understood by reform in the civilized world. A resident in the Transvaal, anxious to bring up the institutions of the country to a level approximate to that recognised in the land of his birth, could not live nine years among the burghers without his opinions being well known to his neighbours. Such a man was asked to divest himself of his nationality in order that at the end of this probationary period he might submit the question of his eligibility to burghers who detested his political views. He would certainly be rejected, while the parasites of foreign concessionaires, anxious for the maintenance of all existing abuses, would swarm in. It was on the occasion of this speech that the President demanded blind and unquestioning confidence on the part of the burghers. In replying to questions put to him, he stated, according to the authorized report, that

they (the burghers) must have implicit faith in the Government. There were many things which for reasons of State had to be kept private for the time, but would become known later. Some members of the Raad wanted the secret service expenditure discussed in the Raad, but why should that be if they agreed to the expenditure? It would be no longer secret. Surely it was sufficient that the members of the Estimates Commission went through the items of expenditure and approved of every penny. He called to mind the remark of Mr. Labuschagne in the Raad when this matter was discussed. It was that the burghers should bear in mind that Samson lost his strength simply because he could not keep a secret. That fact should be kept in mind.

A few days later President Kruger spoke for the last time in Johannesburg. The occasion was one of the presentation of addresses from the Chamber of Mines and the Chambers of Commerce, of which M. Rouliot and Mr. Hosken were

respectively Presidents. The addresses were of a colourless nature, but the speech of the President deserves reproduction in full:

Burghers (said the President),[1] at different times the people of Johannesburg have desired me to hold a meeting here, but you must understand that when I speak, if there is a noise, it is a proof that it is not true, for that will show that you do not want to hear me; but if you are quiet, I shall see that you do want to hear me, and then I shall be glad and feel joyous that I came, and it may happen again that I shall come over. I first want to answer the addresses shortly. I say in reply to all the addresses that I tender you my hearty thanks for all the kind words therein contained. I also thank this large meeting that I see here before me for having come here. I wish to say only a few words on the addresses now, as I shall reply to them in writing when I return home. But I wish now to speak about my policy, as to the way I think and desire to govern the country and think the country should be governed.

You will have read in the papers about the meetings that have already taken place, what I have spoken with regard to these matters. Now I will speak upon each point again, separately, but briefly.

The first point I wish to speak about is the franchise. I would not be worthy to be the head of the State if I did not protect the old burghers; nor would I be worthy to be the head of the State if I did not bear in mind the interests of the new population with the object of helping them. I make no distinction between nationalities. I only make a distinction between good and bad people, between those who are loyal and those who are not. You will know that when we[2] first discovered these goldfields, and they began to be worked, the franchise was given to anyone who had lived here a year. But when from all countries and all nations people began to stream in, it became our duty to prevent the old burghers from being overwhelmed. I would not have been worthy of my position if I had allowed the new-comers to immediately sweep away and overwhelm the old inhabitants of the country. Then the law was made that after two years' residence a man could get himself naturalized. Then he would have a vote for the Second Volksraad and Commandants and Field-Cornets. After two years' more residence—that is, four in all—he can be elected a member of the Second Volksraad, and from that time he would still have to wait ten years before he could have the full franchise in this country; and the reason of that was that at the time that this law was made the original inhabitants of this country, the pilgrim fathers, were but a handful, whereas there were coming thousands and thousands of new people into the country. But then the law was so stringent that a man had to wait twenty years before he could become a full burgher of this country, but now it is fourteen years in all. When we made that Franchise Law the burghers who had the right of voting were only about 12,000, so that it would be very easy by other strangers coming in and getting the franchise immediately to swamp those original inhabitants; but now the original inhabitants and their descendants amount to about 30,000 or 40,000. Therefore, I wish now to propose to the Volksraad to diminish the time for giving the right of voting, and to reduce it by five years. Then they will more easily be able to become full registered voters, and after a time, say, perhaps, ten years, if I am still alive, or, if not, my successors, I would then propose to the Volksraad to make the

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 205.

[2] The 'we' is sublime.

time still shorter, for you see that in other countries where the time which must elapse before a man can become a full voter, get the full franchise, is shorter in Europe and the United States and other countries; but these countries contain an immense population as compared with the newcomers, whereas here it is the converse. I might have been able to do this sooner had it not been that there are some—of course, I exclude all those who are true and loyal and friendly—who make trouble; and by doing so, and going to others instead of coming to me, they make it difficult for me to do what I wish to do. Every one of you will eventually be convinced that if we are to go along in a friendly manner, and if you gain the confidence of the old inhabitants of the country, you will get the full burghership sooner than otherwise, for you must understand that I have got to carry my old burghers with me in any movement of this sort, and when we are on the point of succeeding some trouble or other arises, and I am prevented from doing what I wish. You must understand thoroughly that we do not allow bigamy in this country. By speaking of bigamy, I am referring to the Government of this country, and of the British and other Governments. A man cannot marry his second wife; he must first get a divorce from his first wife. I am referring to naturalization. A man cannot serve two masters, and if he has two wives he will despise the one and respect the other. Therefore, if a man wants to make this country his home and become a burgher, he must first become naturalized. If he does not desire to do that, and wishes to remain a stranger, I will treat him as a stranger should be treated—with all hospitality. So long as he remains obedient to the law, I will help him to make money and get on in this country and live comfortably; and when he goes away, having perhaps made enough money, I shall always be sorry, if he has loyally behaved himself, and should he wish to return, we will always receive him with open arms. . . .

Then, I hear it stated in the newspapers that I do not redeem my promises, and I deny it. You must not look at what the newspapers say about it, but at what I say at the meetings of the people and in the Volksraad. After the Jameson Raid I said I wished to forgive everyone except the leaders, who should be punished. In the second proclamation I said if they would give me a chance I wished to forgive and forget, and I have acted in accordance therewith. But there are others who have not helped in that direction. They make a noise and trouble, and my people say, 'You have not done as you promised.' But if you will co-operate and work along with the Government and the Volksraad, then such things will not occur again, because then you strengthen my hands, so that I can get these things passed by the Volksraad and agreed to by my burghers.

Mr. Kruger then went on to refer to the petition to the Queen:

Now, I want to ask you if that is an encouragement to me? I have had two meetings, and especially at the last, at Rustenburg, I stated my views, and then they make memorials and send them to other countries. Some of my burghers said to me, 'Look; you want to help them, and they send memorials to other countries against us.' Then I said to them, 'Don't count the population of Johannesburg as a whole. It is only a small number, a small portion, who want to make trouble like that.' I cannot lay the blame on the large majority who wish to work in friendliness. I must go on with my work and help them. I see in the papers

that Mr. Chamberlain said I have not kept my promises. If he said so—I do not know whether he did—then it is those untruthful people have made him believe that. They want to say they are oppressed and have grievances, but the trouble with some men is, not that they have grievances, but that they want to be from under this Government and under another. I said at Rustenburg and elsewhere that I saw the majority were satisfied when I said that 'those making trouble wanted to fish in troubled waters.' They do not want peace; they want trouble. But I hope that I may be able, as I intend, to bring these matters before the Volksraad and get them to agree to what I desire, and then I trust that your wish in these matters will also be granted. Even as regards the franchise, if you show sympathy with what I am trying to do, you will not, I think, have long to wait before you get the full right of burghership. But if every time I am making these attempts people make trouble, you must not go and lay the blame on me when the Volksraad rejects it. You must lay it in the right quarter, for I must get these things through the Volksraad; and not only must I get them through the Volksraad, but I must also convince my burghers of the justice of what I am proposing. I shall trust that you will loyally obey the laws and work together with me, and then you will see that I will act in accordance with my promises.

Lord Milner wrote to Mr. Chamberlain a comment upon these speeches and the articles with regard to them which appeared in the inspired Government press.

As you are well aware,[1] it is a favourite device of the Government organs in the South African Republic, and of the apologists of the Government elsewhere, to attribute the Reform Movement, which is once more assuming such formidable proportions, to the intrigues of 'capitalists.' In order to checkmate that movement, a great effort has lately been made by the *Standard and Diggers' News* to sow dissension between the leaders of the mining industry and the bulk of the Uitlander population. Whatever success may have attended that effort, I do not believe it has had the smallest effect in reconciling the middle or working classes of Johannesburg to the methods of Boer Government, or in making them regard otherwise than with extreme aversion a system under which they are constantly made to feel that they are aliens, inferiors, and suspects in the eyes of the ruling caste. Some of them, whose only desire is to get out of the country as soon as possible, are in favour of peace and quiet on any terms, simply because they reckon on making money faster, and therefore getting away faster than they could do in a time of political unrest. But those who, from necessity or from choice, foresee a longer sojourn or permanent residence in the country, feel deeply the indignity of the position, and in view of their enduring interests in the country are less tolerant of a misgovernment that may affect them and their children for long years. These are the men—and they number many thousands—who of all the Uitlanders would probably make the best citizens of the State, yet whose admission to citizenship is at present subject to conditions which render it difficult and almost impossible. But it is plain that without civic rights they can do nothing for themselves in the way of removing those evils, injustices, and dangers of which they complain.

It is true that President Kruger has of late expressed his intention of lowering the barrier which stands between the Uitlander, however well-

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 207.

fitted for citizenship, and the attainment of full burgher rights. But an examination of his proposals goes far to dispel any hopes which might be based on the President's expressed desire 'to extend the hand' of welcome to the Uitlander. All that these proposals come to is a reduction of the period of probation between naturalization and the attainment of the full franchise—*i.e.*, the right to vote for members of the First as well as of the Second Raad—from fourteen years to nine. After, as before, it will be impossible for a man not hitherto naturalized to obtain full citizenship in less than nine years from the present time, even though he may already have been resident for fifteen years in the country. After, as before, he can only be naturalized—*i.e.*, admitted to the period of probation in which he has lost one citizenship without attaining another—by an oath in which he not only swears fealty to the South African Republic, but renounces with offensive emphasis his existing allegiance. After, as before, his admission to full citizenship, even after this renunciation and the nine years' probation following it, will depend upon the consent of two-thirds of the burghers of his district and the approval of the Government. In fact, it is not a *right* at all which he gets by his naturalization and all that he sacrifices for it, but merely a *prospect*[1] which the caprice of the old burghers or the Government may render for ever delusive. Add to this that a simple resolution of the First Raad, passed at twenty-four hours' notice, may at any time upset the proposed arrangement even should it become law, and the naturalized Uitlander, at the end of his nine years' probation, may wake up any morning to find that it has been prolonged for another nine—or ninety. Finally, be it observed that if all the Uitlanders in Johannesburg were to be naturalized, and even if these new citizens should outnumber the old ones in the whole of the Transvaal, they would still only return two members in a Raad of twenty-eight.

This is the outlook for the gentlemen who waited on Mr. Greene and others of their class[2] when their rulers are in a yielding and conciliatory mood. It is small wonder if they find little comfort in it. Yet what are they to do to make things better? They cannot fight, being unarmed, and as carefully guarded as the prisoners in a gaol are by their warder. They cannot agitate constitutionally with any hope of success. It is to this *impasse* that we owe the petition which I had the honour to transmit to you a fortnight ago, and the whole moral justification of which lies in the fact that the people who are calling to Her Majesty's Government to help them would be ready enough to help themselves if they were not absolutely debarred from every means of doing so.

The questions here raised are most important, as illustrating the attitude adopted by the Imperial Government and by Lord Milner towards the Transvaal difficulty. It disposes entirely of the one indictment brought in Continental Europe with effect against the British Government and by the pro-Boers of Great Britain, that the war was due to capitalists' influence. As a matter of fact, as I shall show, the interests of the capitalists, regarded from an exclusively financial point of view, were bound up with those of the oligarchy at Pretoria,

[1] The italics are Lord Milner's.

[2] A deputation of working men.

rather than with those of the bulk of the Uitlander population. Long before the Raid the working-classes in Johannesburg and its neighbourhood were clamouring for reform, and complaining bitterly of the aloofness displayed by the leaders of the mining industry in the Transvaal. Capitalists, as a class, had their grievances against the Executive. The dynamite concessions, the enhanced cost of white labour due to the excessive tariffs on food-stuffs, the inadequacy of the police to check the sale of liquor amongst the natives or to prevent theft of gold on an enormous scale from the mines—these and other matters on which I have dwelt before did undoubtedly affect the financiers of the Rand as a whole.

On the other hand, the capitalists enjoyed under the corrupt régime of Mr. Kruger advantages which, if illicit, were none the less fruitful. It is a remarkable fact that nearly every writer who has dealt with the matter with expert knowledge has declared that the gold laws of the Transvaal were admirably adapted to suit the operations of men possessed of vast resources. In the most remarkable book which has yet been published upon the latent wealth and splendid prospects of the new South Africa, we have an expert's view of the situation as it existed before the war. On many other grounds Mr. Bleloch's statements[1] deserves the closest attention on the part of all concerned with the future of South Africa. But in connection with my own subject, his references to the consequences of the Gold Law are of the greatest importance.

It may be useful (he says)[2] to assert authoritatively here that the impression which seems to be prevalent in England and elsewhere, that the Rand capitalists brought about the war, rests more on want of knowledge than on fact. The capitalists, no doubt, tried to squeeze or cajole the Transvaal Government into conceding certain demands affecting mostly their own interests, and on the Education Question, the Drink Question, and others, they even, if you will, tried to secure better government. But the final stand for justice, which was made by the people generally, at first obtained little support from them.

At the annual meeting of the Chamber of Mines, held on January 12, 1899, M. Rouliot,[3] in his speech from the chair, stated, *inter alia:*

[1] 'The New South Africa,' by W. Bleloch (William Heinemann).

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

[3] M. Rouliot, the President of the Chamber of Mines, was a Frenchman possessed of much tact and judgment, who never allowed national prejudices to affect his duties as the representative of important French financial interests in the Transvaal. He had the great advantage of a complete mastery of the English

'What I want to tell our Government is this: We want to help you; we want to work with you for the good of the country; but do not render the task impossible by a prejudiced conviction, and by always rejecting our advances with contempt.

'Whilst reviewing the events of the past year, I cannot help referring to the attitude taken up by the local press, and the influence it exercises over the public mind. On one side I personally deprecate this perpetual, ever-ready criticism against any act of Pretoria, even if the facts could be construed so as to justify it. Constant nagging is undignified and conducive to no good; it serves only to irritate without bringing any advantage.'

In fact, it is a matter of common knowledge that the big houses endeavoured in various ways to hold the popular voice in check, and one financial house even dismissed an important member of its staff because he insisted on fulfilling his public duty as President of the South African League. It was only when they perceived that the inevitable crisis was arriving that the majority of the capitalists heartily ranged themselves on the side which demanded the safeguarding of British rights and interests, and just and equal government. The Reform Movement was merely a game of bluff, which, had it not been for Dr. Jameson, might have succeeded in its object—namely, the establishment within the Transvaal of a solid Republican Government. Many burghers at that time were dissatisfied with the Government, and would have supported an internal movement for reform. The flag of the Reformers of 1895-96 was that of the South African Republic.

Nor was the attitude of the wealthy interests to be wondered at. German and French capital is largely interested and represented on the Rand, and a war would be likely to cause great immediate loss to all investors in Rand mines. The mines themselves might be destroyed, and twenty millions of damage might be done to them and their machinery. Some of the financiers were of the same opinion as their friends, the Boers, that the result of the war was not a certainty for Great Britain, and that even if it should finally be won by her, that in any case it would be a struggle long drawn out. Nor have events proved that they were far wrong. Let people in Britain inquire into this matter, and especially let the leaders of the Liberal party do so, and they will find that they are hitting their own friends in many cases when they condemn the war on the ground that it was brought about by capitalists. It was a combination of the Conservative, the Liberal, the Radical, and even the Irish National parties of Johannesburg which demanded justice and fair treatment as white men from the Transvaal Government. Nearly all the Britishers stood together, and they were joined eventually by many of the capitalists, most of the Americans, many colonials, both of Dutch and British descent, and by others of all nationalities.

The parties who were quite satisfied to leave things as they were under the old Government are exactly those on whom the Radicals in England may well expend their invectives. The monopolists, a few of the financiers, the concessionaires on the one hand, and the illicit drink-sellers, the illicit gold-buyers, and their protectors, the corrupt officials, on the other hand, were equally loath to see the Transvaal Government in serious danger, and this for the simple reason that they could never hope to obtain another which would so well suit their interests. The same combination—the Liberals, Conservatives, Radicals—which made

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language in all its various branches, from the argot of the Stock Exchange down to that of the race-course.

up the party beseeching fair treatment from the Transvaal Government now ask for the same from Great Britain.[1]

Before proceeding, it must be stated that those capitalists who, although at first against the demand for justice being pushed to an extremity, but who afterwards threw in their lot with their fellows, have since energetically taken up the Imperial side. They have contributed liberally to the various relief funds; they have equipped and supported several splendid fighting corps, among others the famous Imperial Light Horse. Some of them have not done their duty merely by proxy, but have gone into the thick of the battle themselves, and fought with bravery and distinction.[2]

Further, they have expended immense sums in supporting their employés by allowing them half-pay during the war. They have not been niggardly in parting with some of their wealth to their fellow-men of the Rand since the pinch became severe. In fact, the great sums which they have provided voluntarily must, in many cases, have proved a serious drain on even their resources, especially seeing that the payments have been spread over a long period when their mines were producing nothing, except what was taken by the enemy, and when the market value of their properties was continually falling. All these things must be reckoned to the Rand capitalists for good; they have during the war kept thousands from starvation. If they continue to acknowledge the duties of wealth as well as its privileges, they need not fear the attacks of extremists.

Yet, although the part played by many of the capitalists since the crisis has deserved every praise, this does not alter the fact that under the old régime money was the most powerful factor in determining many of the laws, and that naturally the wealthy men made the most of their opportunity.

It can be shown by reference to memorials presented to the Volksraad by the Chamber of Mines that the leaders of the mining community often endeavoured to get the laws passed to their liking, and they very often succeeded. How it was done may perhaps be imagined by those acquainted with Johannesburg-Pretoria diplomacy. The alterations of the werf right clause in the Gold Law, whereby instead of one-thirtieth of the farm an unlimited extent was made securable by the owner, has always been a mystery. The Volksleden, in making the alterations, must have been fully aware that they were only securing enormous benefits for the very people—the capitalists—they were professing to hold as their enemies.

Mr. Bleloch proceeds to give instances of the favouritism shown to the capitalist, and then proceeds[3]:

[1] A better instance of the truth of this could not be desired than that supplied by the character, and even the prejudice, of the late Mr. Dodd. I have never met a man whose Radicalism was more sincere and ingrained than that of this worthy man, who was driven to take an active part in the struggle by his innate Radicalism, and who fell a victim to fever while he was fighting for a cause in which he had no financial interest whatever. Bitterly as he deplored Mr. Gladstone's South African policy, the slightest adverse reflection upon that statesman's memory goaded him into wrath such as he only exhibited when denouncing the corruption of the oligarchy at Pretoria.

[2] The brothers Farrer, for instance, two sturdy Yorkshiremen who have become millionaires, were frequently mentioned in despatches, and received the D.S.O. as some recognition for the valour and energy they displayed in the field.

[3] 'The New South Africa,' by W. Bleloch (William Heinemann), p. 69.

These instances are only a few among the many, and are only quoted to show that, far from there having been a continual condition of antagonism between the capitalists and the Volksraad, on many occasions legislation was moulded to their wishes, and the members of both Volksraad and Chamber were individually often on the best of terms. In fairness, it must be added that many of the memorials presented to the Volksraad by the Chamber of Mines prayed for reforms and amendments of general usefulness and benefit to the whole community. But it was not always so There was, for instance, no protest on behalf of peggers and prospectors when the granting of mynpachts was allowed over unlimited werf areas, giving the owners great areas of valuable ground which should rightly have been left for the public to peg. The alteration was noted in the Chamber of Mines' reports in language which conveys an impression of gratified satisfaction. If owners' rights had been trenched upon it would have been another matter. Prospectors and peggers are evidently in the minds of the members of the Chamber of Mines beyond the pale of the 'Industry.' They are looked upon as only useful for providing them with a convenient revenue in the shape of their moiety of the claims' licenses which they are particular to save intact. Witness the memorial to the Volksraad on that question just quoted. It will be gathered that the Chamber of Mines jealously looked after the interests of the houses of which the Chamber is the representative, and that any question was always looked at from the point of view of warding off any encroachment on their privileges.

Before the war all the capitalists kept up a chorus of approval of the Gold Law, and even now Mr. J. B. Robinson is advocating the continuance of its provisions. They know it is a law which gives them much and asks for little in return. Mr. G. Albu has stated that it is the best Gold Law in the world—quite a natural statement, seeing that he indirectly helped to make it. . . .

As has been stated, the law secures to the owner of the farm—that is, *de facto*, to the wealthy corporation or firm who buys his rights—certain very important first selections. There are the mynpachts, the vergunning and owner's claims, the werven or homestead rights, all of which combined are made to embrace everything from a half to two-thirds of the farm. The operation of the clause regarding homesteads as it now stands is especially unfair.

By these provisions the wealthy owners bite off such huge mouthfuls of the cake that it takes even them some considerable time to chew and swallow them, and even longer periods are required for digestion.

They receive most of this ground for a mere trifle of annual rental—10s. per morgen per annum. It is true that they have to pay what seems a large sum in each case to the owner of the farm for the purchase price of his rights; but let the sum be even £100,000, and a little inquiry will show that it is insignificant in comparison to the advantages obtained. On one farm, for which the financial house which purchased it paid £100,000—the mynpachts were granted immediately before the war—a total area was secured of nearly 2,400 claims. This will bring the purchase price per claim out at about £42. Already the market quotation for the shares of the company into which this area was floated stands at a price which brings up the value to over £2,000,000, or £420 per claim, and the transaction shows a profit of 900 per cent. without ever a pick being put into the ground. Having made an enormous and an immediate profit by such a flotation, the lucky house settles down to the exploitation of the property. The process will take the form of the formation of a number of subsidiary companies, which one by one will be put on the

market at prices of from £2 to £3 sterling for a £1 share. In this way the original company secures working capital for each mine, into which it subdivides its property; and if it chooses it can also derive a further enormous and immediate profit by the sale of a portion of the vendor's shares in each of these subsidiaries.

The directors of such a company and its able managers—for on the Rand they are all picked men, eminent in their profession—will superintend the equipment of the various mines and start them properly on a profitable career. This process on a large piece of ground will occupy several years. Deep shafts have to be sunk, which will take up considerable time. While this is going on, there is no necessity for the company gorging itself by buying more of the deeper ground, especially as the Gold Law kindly provides that the rest of the farm, of which it is now the owner, shall bring it in a comfortable yearly revenue. The fact must not be lost sight of that naturally the ground where the reefs are nearest the surface has been secured to the company, leaving only the deeper levels for public pegging. The public promptly and foolishly pegs this deep level ground and as promptly endeavours to sell it, but it is quickly found that the market is limited. If the claims are offered in Johannesburg, there are only six or eight possible buyers, and these have ground enough, which they have obtained by the kindness of the Gold Law at insignificant cost. If a representative is sent to London, Paris, or Berlin to try and effect a sale or raise a company, he will soon find that the only buyers there are the associates and partners of his Johannesburg friends who have already refused his offer. After spending some time and a considerable amount of money, he comes back and reports his failure to the syndicate of peggers he represents. These hold a meeting, and decide whether to go on paying licenses or give up the ground. Eventually, after paying for a number of years, the holders either abandon their property or sell it at a nominal price, frequently making a heavy loss on the whole transaction. All this time the owners have been receiving 2s. 6d. per claim per month in respect of this ground, and having by now digested the areas they in the first instance secured, they send a representative to attend the Government sale if the peggers have by then abandoned their claims; but if they still hang on, they will send an agent, who generally succeeds in securing the ground that is wanted for a mere song. Soon afterwards, the formation of another great deep-level company will be heard of, and its shares will be put on the market at a price which will bring the value per claim up to £3,000 or £4,000 for the same ground which a few weeks before went begging at from £50 to £100. This whole process is known on the Rand by the name of 'freezing out,' and the Gold Law is the driving-wheel of the whole machinery. No wonder the wealthy financier calls it a good law. Many holders of rich ground have been ruined by the process.

I have quoted this passage on the principle which has guided me throughout this work, because I prefer the evidence of hostile witnesses to that of those who may be suspected of making up a case. The financial advantages thus derived by the capitalists from the laws and their administration in the Transvaal may be regarded with suspicion by political purists, but they do not contravene the code of morality ordinarily respected by honest and upright

men engaged in financial enterprise. As much, however, cannot be said for the profits derived from the administrative corruption which prevailed in the Transvaal. That the most flagrant venality prevailed in the most 'respectable quarters' is matter of common notoriety, and can be best illustrated by a few extracts from the confessions of Mr. D. M. Wilson, who has written a most entertaining work called 'Behind the Scenes in the Transvaal.'[1] Mr. Wilson, by a fortunate accident, of which he gives an amusing account in his book, suddenly rose from the position of station-master at Beaufort West to that of Mining Commissioner of Dekaap Gold-fields. Mr. Wilson incidentally tells us of the proceedings which led to the proclamation of the Dekaap Fields, which yielded within a few months a revenue of £120,000 a year:

> Taking advantage (he says) of the production of a number of unusually fine specimens of quartz from newly discovered reefs, among them being the since famous Sheba, I journeyed to Pretoria, bent on inducing the Government to proclaim the Dekaap Gold-fields, for I felt I was being made a party to a fraud which the Government was perpetrating on the miners, who for the most part believed they had a secure title to their claims. When I arrived at the Presidency, Mr. Kruger was out. He returned shortly, carrying a roll of tobacco. As he presented me with part of it, he remarked: 'See what our burghers have come to. I've just bought this ten-pound roll of tobacco for a shilling, and we have just half a crown in the Standard Bank to keep our account open.'[2]

After some reluctance, the fields were proclaimed, with the results I have mentioned. The business resulting from the development of these fields necessitated a division of labours in the commissionship, and Mr. Wilson tells us how he pressed the Government 'to divide both office and duties by appointing a Mining Commissioner for Barberton, and suggested as a fit and proper person the Rev. J. L. van der Merver, who afterwards held the corresponding position at Johannesburg.'[3] So in Pretoria in these early days did they combine the service of God and Mammon.

The most important portion of this captivating work deals with the administrative corruption which prevailed in the Transvaal, and as Mr. Wilson was not only an eye-witness of, but participator in, some of the jobs perpetrated, he may be taken as a trustworthy witness, especially as he

[1] 'Behind the Scenes in the Transvaal' (Cassell and Co.).
[2] *Loc. cit.*, p. 40. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

gives chapter and verse for the somewhat startling revelations he makes. I have no hesitation, therefore, in quoting at some length from Mr. Wilson's book, the less so because I hope that the samples will induce readers to exploit the main reef for themselves, and I can promise them that from beginning to end of Mr. Wilson's book they will not find a dull or uninstructive page:

The pay of Raadsleden (members of the Volksraad) at the time I was initiated into Pretorian politics was 30s. per day, later increased to £3, but by serving on committees the fees would augment the daily stipend by thrice that sum. If, as frequently happened, a member contrived to get on to three or four committees, he could earn as much as £5 per day. I have known members to be on four committees at the same time, and considerable arrangement was sometimes necessary to enable them to be present at all of them when the roll was called, for absence from roll-call, both in the Raad and on Committee, deprived a member of that day's pay.

Probably there was no more regularly and punctually-attended Parliament in the world than that at Pretoria, and surely there were no legislators who lived more economically while carrying on their duties. When I was first at Pretoria the members for the most part lived in their tents and waggons outspanned on the Church Square, under conditions very little different from their life when trekking over the veldt. Some of the members who did not bring their families with them, or who provided for them in other ways, would take a room and live four and six together, providing their own food, the bulk of which they would bring with them in the shape of biltong, or sun-dried strips of beef or venison, and sacks of mealies and Boer meal. Even to the last, many members of the Raad lived during the session in this squalid, thrifty manner. They spent nothing in luxuries, regarding it as the privilege and duty of favour-seekers—with whom Pretoria always swarmed while the Raad was in session—to keep them supplied with liquor and cigars, or any other luxury they might fancy. No Raadsled would have deemed it beneath his dignity to invite a person to whom he had been introduced to 'stand him a drink,' and there were members of the Raad, free-drinkers in every sense of the word, who had never been known to drink at their own expense.

I was one of the stewards of the first Agricultural Show held at Pretoria, and was frequently amused by the sight of rows of Raad members standing on bricks and hanging on to the corrugated iron fence to obtain a free view of the proceedings, rather than pay the admission fee of two shillings. Not even a judgment visited upon one of these parsimonious legislators had the customary deterrent effect of such visitations. He was hanging on with hands and chin, when one of the three bricks which formed his fragile platform slipped, and the Raadsled, a seventeen-stone man, fell with his jaw on the sharp edge of the sheet-iron fencing. The jerk not only made him a silent member of the Raad for a week, but caused his pipe to fall inside the grounds. Not a whit abashed, the member went to the entrance, and requested one of the committee-men to find and restore it. Meanwhile the Kaffirs were imitating the example of the legislators, and erecting brick platforms; but the policemen marched round with a rattan and cleared them off, the privilege of a free view being the right of a Raad member only.

The life of a Raadsled, or member of the Raad, during the session was as much a matter of routine as that of a soldier. He rose often before the sun, drank his coffee, and proceeded to the residence of the President, where he was generally in time to be present at the devotional service with which His Honour always began the day. Devotions over, coffee was brought in, pipes lighted, and the President began his course of instruction as to how he desired his members to vote during the day. I have been present on more than one occasion at these morning instructions, when the President has coolly directed those present to vote in a certain way, excusing himself from giving his reasons, on the ground that the subject was one of such importance that he could not in the interest of the State disclose further particulars. I do not remember having heard of this dictation being resented by any member, for there were few who would have had the courage to oppose the will of the President. I have heard him declare that they were to vote as directed, in spite of anything he might say to the contrary in the Raad. Thus, the cunning diplomatist frequently got credit with the Uitlander for throwing his personal influence on the side opposed to the vote of the Raad. Again and again has the *Star*, the organ of the Uitlander, given the President credit for sympathies he did not possess, and many a concession-hunter has been hoodwinked by this double cunning of the President, who, while appearing to perform his promise to support a particular motion, has taken care that his public utterances shall not influence his pre-arranged intentions in the matter.

At these conferences it was usual to find one or more representatives of that influential body of plotters and plunderers appropriately named the Third Raad. This secret organization, which has been the means of enriching itself and the relatives and favoured ones of President Kruger, consisted of the following recognised members: Frikkie Eloff, son-in-law of the President; C. Schutte, Landdrost of Pretoria; Commandant Hendrik Schoeman; Commandant Grobler; Commandant Potgieter—all old and close friends of the President—and the notorious Solomon Gillingham, a colonial of Irish extraction, who carries on a lucrative business in Pretoria as a baker and confectioner. It is safe to assert that no concession, and, indeed, no piece of legislation likely to bring profit to any individual, could be insured safe passage through the Raad without the consent and assistance, active or passive, of this powerful and unscrupulous body. There was no false delicacy or concealment of motive about their procedure. Before a concession-seeker had been an hour in Pretoria, he would be called upon by one of the Third Raad members, and given plainly to understand that they required an interest in his project, and he would be either very innocent or very foolish if he ignored their claims.

While a well-known case was pending in the High Court not long ago, a member of the Third Raad had the audacity to approach one of the litigants and guarantee judgment in his favour on payment of £50,000. The prospect of the decision being an adverse one was regarded by the litigant and his advisers as too improbable to be seriously entertained, yet, to the amazement of every disinterested lawyer in the country, judgment was given for the other side.

My first personal experience of the power of the Third Raad is worth narrating, as it is not only a very fair sample of its methods, but also of those of the Pretoria Government. Tenders had been asked for a contract to water the streets of Pretoria. I sent in one, as did the Pretoria Waterworks Company, whose tender was considerably below mine, and was accordingly accepted. An hour or two later a representative of the

Third Raad called upon me and stated that he was empowered to make me an offer, which was to the following effect: I was to write immediately to the Government, offer to do the work for £3,000 per annum, and pay the Third Raad £600 a year. As my rejected tender was only £1,750 I was naturally sceptical as to this second offer being entertained, particularly as the matter had been closed and the tender of the Waterworks Company accepted. I expressed my doubts as to the utility of renewing an offer, but was told that the matter rested with the Third Raad, who had power to do as they pleased.

My original tender had required me to supply my own plant, but the amended one carried with it the very important advantage of the free use of the Government plant, which Landdrost Schutte undertook to place at my disposal. The offer was submitted to the Government, and next day I received formal notice that it had been accepted. The Waterworks Company were informed at the same time that their accepted tender had been cancelled. The company immediately applied to the Court for an injunction, and the Government wrote asking me to withdraw my tender, promising to compensate me in some other way.[1]

Here is another instance in the case of the proposed railway from Rustenburg to the Rand:[2]

This project (says Mr. Wilson) had for its object the opening up of the rich and only partially developed agricultural district of Rustenburg, in the north-west of the Transvaal. The cheapest and most direct route to the Rand was viâ Krugersdorp. In fact, it was the only route that would present itself to the most casual or careful investigation. It would pass through the rich pastoral district known as the Moot, whence come nine-tenths of the forage consumed in the Rand, and all the way the line would pass over farms which contributed largely to the produce market. To the surprise of everybody, President Kruger and his following in the Executive and the Raad declared for a circuitous, costly route that would bring the line to Pretoria, nearly forty miles from the only market for the produce of Rustenburg. In addition to its cost and unnecessary length, the line would pass through a district utterly unproductive, from which not sufficient produce would be sent to keep a re ail dealer going. Yet the Krugerite party fought for this outrageous proposal tooth and nail. Deputation after deputation waited on the President and endeavoured to shake his resolution, but without effect. When the matter came up for discussion in the Raad, the feeling was so obviously in favour of the Krugersdorp route that the President had to play a desperate game. As was his custom when pressed into a corner, he pleaded important State reasons, making the surprising statement that at the recent meeting between himself and the President of the Free State the latter had strongly objected to the construction of a line of railway running towards the north. Later on the State Secretary, Mr. Reitz, entered the Raad, and, not knowing of the President's statement, replied, when questioned on the alleged objection of the Free State President, that no such remark had been made by Mr. Steyn. The retort of President Kruger was to call his own State Secretary a liar, an incident that caused a slight flutter for a day or two.

As there seemed no other way of settling the question, certain members of the First Raad requested me to accompany them to Bloem-

[1] *Loc. cit.*, p. 114. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

fontein to ascertain the feeling of the Free State Raad on the matter. We proceeded to the Free State capital, where we called an informal meeting that was attended by twenty-five members of the Raad, and asked their opinion on the question. They one and all declared that they had no opinion on the subject, which they regarded as entirely out of their ken, one of them remarking that if the Free State really objected to railways running north in the Transvaal they would have objected to the Zoutpansberg railway, which opened the route from Rhodesia.

Armed with the authority of the Free State Raad to deny their hostility, we returned to Pretoria, but we could make no public use of our knowledge. The personal influence of President Kruger was too strong. He brought it to bear on the members of the deputation, who weakly consented to let the matter drop. Meanwhile, the secret of the President's advocacy of the unpractical Rustenburg-Pretoria route came out. He and his son-in-law Eloff owned several farms on the proposed line of route, which would have to be taken over by the company at a high figure.[1]

Mr. Wilson gives us a very instructive instance of the slimness by which the members of the oligarchy enriched themselves.

In the very early days (he says),[2] Paul Kruger practised the art of looking after his own interests in one peculiar manner, which was evidently not forgotten in the days of his wealth. It is well known that all the farms acquired in the first years of the presidency of Paul Kruger are much larger than the average farm, and this, despite the fact that they were measured in the same way as other people's, or, at least, the method seemed the same. The early primitive system of measuring a farm was by riding two sides of a square on horseback for sixty minutes in the direction of each side. As the walking pace of a horse is reckoned at three miles an hour over rough ground, this gave a block of nine square miles, which is roughly, though inaccurately, considered to be equal to 3,000 morgen, or 6,000 English acres. Paul Kruger was shrewd enough to see that, as the Scripture puts it, 'There is much profit in the legs of a horse,' so he made a point of selecting a quick-walking animal for these land-measuring operations, with the result that he owns, or has owned, many hundreds of acres of land more than he was legally entitled to. It is but fair, however, to admit that the practice was not confined to Paul Kruger. Many Boers owned a horse kept specially for farm-measuring because of his fast-walking pace.

The wealth of President Kruger and his family in farms alone is very considerable. For many years he made a practice of buying up burgher rights—that is, the right given to every burgher and son of a burgher on attaining his eighteenth year to select a farm of 3,000 morgen. In 1894 the Raad abrogated this right, giving notice that all claims not exercised since 1875 were to be handed in to the Government, who would consider

[1] This story tallies exactly with the statement made to me by a very distinguished official in South Africa, who, after the British occupation of Rustenburg, had to examine the titles to farms in that neighbourhood. The names given to many of the registered owners were obviously fictitious, some of them being mere slang expressions. On inquiring an explanation from the Boer clerk who acted as translator, he was at once told that all these pseudonyms represented either Mr. Kruger or his son-in-law Frikkie Eloff.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 130.

such case on its merits and award a farm or a werf—that is, a building site in a township. In the meantime, President Kruger had bought up as many of these rights as possible. There were many in the market, for every burgher's son did not avail himself of his privilege, and preferred to sell his right for cash. The price paid for these burgher rights by the President and certain members of the Third Raad to my knowledge averaged £5. President Kruger filed over 100 of these purchased rights, and when the Raad considered the claims 'on their merits,' they were assessed as worth a whole 6,000 acre farm each, so that by a cash expenditure of £500 President Kruger became the freeholder of 600,000 acres of land, or 937 square miles. . . .

President Kruger's private fortune was well invested. To my knowledge he had £700,000 in Java, where it was invested under the advice of Dr. Leyds, who was supposed to be an authority on the Dutch East Indies, and £400,000 in Berlin. I have frequently been present when the subject of the President's private investments has been discussed, and this circumstance, together with statements made to me by persons in a position to know, justify me in assessing the actual cash value of his possessions at two and a half millions. . . .

It is characteristic of the Transvaal (said Mr. Wilson[1]) that no tribute was ever paid to the services of Nelmapius beyond the customary newspaper recital of his virtues in the very bald obituary notices. Yet no man did more for the Transvaal than he, and his death at the early age of forty was a genuine calamity to the State. It is true that many of his projects had for their ultimate object the benefit of himself, but there is this redeeming feature about most of Nelmapius' work, that while he did not forget Number One, yet he was instrumental in bringing about changes of lasting benefit to the community as well.

I remember that his name first came before the Transvaal as the author of a scheme for opening up a camel transport to Delagoa Bay. He was granted a concession, and general interest was felt in the matter, for it appealed to the farmers, and rendered the name of the originator a household word in the country. Many of his undertakings have since become of value, and have been absorbed into other enterprises, all productive and useful. The two concessions with which his name will always be associated are the Hatherley Distillery, appropriately named De Eerste Fabricken (the First Manufactory), and the gunpowder concession, which developed into the infamous dynamite monopoly. This brandy concession gave Nelmapius the sole right to distil brandy and every kind of spirit for the space of ten years. The splendid manufactory outside Pretoria was erected, and I was present at the opening ceremony, which was performed by the late General Joubert, then Native Commissioner. I remember one remark made at the inauguration which time has justified. 'In this brandy and manufactory you have a short and cheap method of settling the Native Question.'

This suggestion that the Kaffir might be cheaply exterminated by encouraging him to drink was received with marked approval. It was on this occasion that the much-quoted phrase 'a corner-stone of the State' was first used. Piet Joubert applied it to the distillery, a fact which appears to have escaped the notice of the journalists of the later period.

With one more instance I must close these object-lessons in administration. Mr. Wilson was interested in securing a

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

concession for an electric-tram line which, in addition to catering to the ordinary traffic of the town of Johannesburg, should open up the districts east, west, north, and south by running ten miles in each direction. The President at first favoured the scheme, and promised his support, the feature in the project that appealed to him most being the opening up of the Johannesburg market to the farmers. Now Mr. Wilson must take up his own story :[1]

The matter was brought before the Executive and supported by the President. With very little loss of time the concession was duly signed, sealed, and delivered, the only stipulation being the deposit of £500 with the Government as caution money. This money was raised by hypothecating the concession with the French Bank, and preliminaries were begun. A plant was ordered in America, routes surveyed, and about £17,000 expended, and liabilities to a large amount entered into, when the concessionaires were staggered by the receipt of a letter from the State Secretary informing them that the Government had withdrawn the concession.

At this stage I was requested by the concessionaires to use my knowledge of the ways of Pretorian diplomacy on their behalf. I began by getting up a memorial to the Raad in favour of the electric tramway. Over 34,000 signatures were obtained, one-third of them being those of burghers, farmers, and genuine sons of the soil. This was sent to the Government, and we patiently awaited the result, but not a word was vouchsafed even in reply to our letters of inquiry.

I then proceeded to Pretoria and saw the President, having first interviewed the State Secretary, Mr. Reitz, who expressed himself strongly in our favour, and promised us all the support possible for him to give. I saw the President several times, but he refused to discuss the matter, and expressed himself so unusually hostile to the concession that my curiosity was aroused to learn the reason for his opposition. The only argument he attempted to employ was the very feeble objection that the introduction of electric traction would not necessitate the employment of horses, and that the farmers would not benefit by supplying the forage. I pointed out that as it was the farmers did not produce sufficient forage to supply the demand of Johannesburg, which had to import from the Free State and the Colony. It was evident there was some personal motive underlying all this, but I was not then able to arrive at the truth.

My next move was to get a deputation of the strongest men in the Raad to wait on the President and effect his conversion. It cost a big sum in cash and promise of shares to induce these patriots to lend their services to further a scheme for the benefit of the farmers ; but the impression on the President was nil. In reply to my protests one day, he assured me that the farmers were dead against the scheme. I inquired how he knew that. 'Only yesterday,' said he, 'I received 1,300 letters asking me not to grant the concession.'

I was astonished, and went to the State Secretary, telling him what the President had said about the letters. Mr. Reitz burst out laughing. 'You ought to know him by this time,' said he. 'He has received no

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 142.

letters except one, and that is a request from his son-in-law for a concession for an electric tramway system all over the country.'

The secret of the President's opposition was out. He was standing in with the opposition scheme of Mr. Frikkie Eloff, his son-in-law and financial adviser.

My work now began in earnest. I had to bribe the Raad and rely upon the promise of the State Secretary to get the matter renewed in the form of a new resolution. I had no difficulty in inducing such members as I considered worth conciliating to accept a written promise to pay sundry sums amounting in the aggregate to £15,000. Of course, it was quite understood between us that this was not a bribe—merely an incentive to extra zeal on their part in behalf of the farmer. Mr. Reitz performed his part of the compact thoroughly, but the President was too smart for him. I had by the State Secretary's instructions kept myself ready for a moment's call, as the subject might be brought up again in the Raad at any time. One afternoon Mr. Reitz rushed out of the Raadzaal just as the President was leaving. 'I'm sorry to have to tell you,' he said, 'that the President has done you a shot in the eye. During the absence of myself and the leading supporters of your matter the President got a resolution rushed through declaring the matter finally disposed of, and you are dished.'

The next expedient consisted in inducing the Memorial Committee to reconsider the matter, and in putting this piece of machinery in motion I had to resort to the aid of the Third Raad, an expensive but necessary process. This influential body performed its contract, and the matter was again placed on the order for discussion in the First Raad. To my disgust and dismay, the Chairman of the Raad opposed the resolution. It was evident that he had not been sufficiently enthused. I drew up a document binding myself to pay the Chairman's nominee £500, and got it passed to him. He opened the note, glanced at it, and the next time he opened his lips it was to unsay his adverse comments and announce his conversion to the scheme. The result was that the matter was referred back to the Government for report, a course which might have meant success; but, for reasons over which the Raad might have had no control, that report was not made.[1]

These, as I have said, are but samples taken almost haphazard from Mr. Wilson's book. For his statements he has not hesitated to give chapter and verse and the names of the principal actors in the perpetration of the jobs mentioned. They tally with stories of a similar character which I heard from the lips of many who had obtained, or failed to obtain, concessions in the Transvaal. But as, in nearly all these cases which came within my own personal knowledge, the principals declined for reasons sufficiently obvious to allow their names to appear, I have contented myself with giving a few of the many instances supplied by Mr. Wilson, of the genuineness of which no Johannesburger at least will doubt. It is obvious, therefore, that unscrupulous capitalists in the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 142.

Rand had to complain rather of the inconstancy of the oligarchy than of its inaccessibility. By dint of bribery and corruption it was always possible to obtain a concession, however outrageous, but there was always the lurking danger that by profligate expenditure the promotors of a rival scheme could secure the cancellation of the original concession. If the proverbial honour amongst thieves had been observed in the Transvaal, there would have been a considerable body of millionaires who had made their fortunes by illicit practices standing by the President in the hour of trial. The willingness, however, of the Third Raad to take money on any terms, and, in the words of Mr. Reitz, 'to dish' their corrupters if more generous ones came forward, destroyed all confidence between the thieves and the receivers.

These facts—and they are hardly in dispute by anybody—have to be borne in mind when we consider the desperate attempts made by the Transvaal Executive to separate the cause of capital and labour on the Rand, and to induce the capitalists to throw over their employés. The correspondence on this subject, which took place some six weeks before the famous despatch by Lord Milner of May 4, 1899, is most interesting. The proposal for a conference emanated from Mr. Lippert, of dynamite concession fame, and he, with other Government emissaries, including the State Secretary, Mr. Reitz, the State Attorney, Mr. Smuts, and Dr. Leyds, endeavoured to make terms with the representatives of the capitalists. In a letter addressed to the State Secretary at Pretoria, bearing date Johannesburg, March 24, 1899, the representatives of the capitalists, who were M. Rouliot, Mr. Birkenruth, Mr. J. M. Pierce, Mr. A. Brakhan, and Mr. H. F. Pistorius, and Mr. W. Dalrymple and J. G. Hamilton as representing the London houses, state that:[1]

On February 27 Mr. E. Lippert called together Messrs. A. Brakhan, E. Birkenruth, and G. Rouliot, to whom he submitted a certain programme, concerning the settlement of some pending questions forming the subject of the graver differences between the Government of the South African Republic on the one part, and the whole Uitlander population and the mining industry on the other part, with a view to ascertain whether these gentlemen were willing to open negotiations on the basis suggested in order to try to come to a settlement. Upon an affirma-

[1] The whole of this correspondence is to be found in Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 215 *et seq.*

tive answer of these gentlemen, Mr. Lippert obtained an equal expression of approval from Dr. Leyds, from the State Attorney, and also from President Kruger.

The preliminary programme, at Mr. Lippert's request, was then communicated by cable to our London friends. Upon receipt of a reply, to the effect that our London friends were in favour of an arrangement which would produce harmony and secure administrative and financial reforms, which was communicated, a meeting was arranged with Dr. Leyds and Messrs. Reitz, Smuts, and Lippert, as representing the Government, on March 9; but as Messrs. Brakhan, Birkenruth and Rouliot had repeatedly mentioned that they did not consider themselves qualified to discuss matters on behalf of the general body of Uitlanders, and seeing that the programme submitted was to be considered as a whole, and either adopted or rejected as such, therefore it would be necessary to obtain the views on the Franchise Question of prominent citizens more able to express the views of the Uitlanders on this subject. Mr. Lippert, on behalf of the Government, invited in addition Messrs. Pierce and Pistorius to be present at the meeting.

The one thing clear from this is that the Government of the Transvaal wanted to buy off the opposition of the capitalists by certain financial concessions which would leave the whole question of political administration untouched. The Uitlander representatives stated in the letter quoted:

It having been stipulated by the Government that the various matters herein dealt with shall be taken as parts of one whole plan, we have bowed to that decision, and we beg now to reply under the various heads, on the understanding that no one portion may be judged as apart from the whole.

With the proposal for the amelioration of the law in favour of the capitalists, I am not now concerned. We come, however, to the representations made by these capitalist delegates on the subject of the franchise. This, they say, still in the same letter,

is a vital point upon which a permanent and favourable settlement must hinge. If a satisfactory solution can be arrived at on this point, as well as on others raised, we shall be prepared to recommend to the industry to make the sacrifices involved in accepting the Government proposals.

We note—

(*a*) That the proposals do not include a substantial reduction of past residence.

(*b*) That the period is seven years.

(*c*) That it is proposed that those who acquire citizenship under the law, if changed as proposed, shall not have the vote for office of President, and the oath of allegiance would be required seven years before the acquisition of united burgher rights.[1]

[1] The importance of these limitations lies in the fact that for seven years those who had taken the oath of allegiance could be compelled to go upon commando, and yet would be denied full burgher rights.

(*d*) The proposed new law would have to be published for a year, and receive the assent of two-thirds of the enfranchised burghers of the Republic.

Whilst declaring ourselves willing to accept and recommend the acceptance of any fair scheme of constitutional reforms, we consider that such a scheme must first be laid before, and approved of by, the unenfranchised community, as the rights and liberties and privileges of the community would depend absolutely on the nature of the reforms.

We have repeated on many occasions that business houses are not qualified to discuss this question on behalf of the general body of Uitlanders, and that we would not presume that we were appointed by the whole community to discuss it on their behalf.

It will therefore be necessary to find means to bring the whole question before those directly affected, who are the only ones entitled to finally dispose of the matter, their acquiescence to the scheme having to be first obtained before we recommend the sacrifices which we contemplate, in order to insure a general, permanent, and peaceful settlement.

For your guidance we enclose an expression of opinion which has been furnished us by some of the most prominent Uitlanders, and places before you the views of a very large and influential section of the community.

The above subjects are only those which have been discussed between the Government representatives and ourselves, but in order to arrive at a final, permanent settlement, we think that we ought to endeavour to remove all other causes of disagreement, and treat as well several other important questions left untouched; and we would beg that the Government will take the necessary steps, as far as may be in their power, to assist the industry by bringing native labour to the gold-fields, and to this end would be willing to confer with the Chamber of Mines as to the best means to be adopted.

The law relating to the sale of intoxicating liquor at present in force, should be maintained and strictly enforced.

We may further state that we have every confidence in the probity and honour of the Judges of the South African Republic, and wish to place on record our desires that the independence of the Bench should be assured and maintained inviolate in the highest interests of all the inhabitants of the Republic.

With this document was enclosed a memorandum on the part of the leaders of the Uitlander population, and it ran as follows:

To Messrs. Rouliot, Birkenruth, Brakhan, Pierce and Pistorius, Johannesburg.

After such investigations as the restrictions imposed have permitted, we are of opinion that it would be quite useless to approach the Uitlander population with the Government proposals in the present form, chiefly for the following reasons:

1. No consideration is given to residence already completed.

2. The alteration of the Franchise Law, according to the lately prescribed procedure, whereby two-thirds of the burghers must signify approval, is a practical impossibility; witness the fact that at the last presidential election, surpassing in excitement and interest all other occasions of general voting, with the recognised leaders in the field, and

every agency at work to stimulate activity, less than two-thirds of the burghers on the register recorded their votes.

3. The present form of oath would be humiliating and unnecessary, in support of which view we instance the fact that quite recently the Volksraad of the Orange Free State rejected the proposed introduction of the same oath of allegiance.

4. The period of disqualification, during which the Uitlander would have given up his own citizenship by naturalizing, and have acquired nothing in return, would be found most objectionable, especially with the experience that rights have in the past been legislated away as they were on the point of maturing.

5. In view of the unique condition of this country, extension of the franchise, without some approach to equitable redistribution of representation, would be regarded as no solution of the question, and might even provoke doubts as to the *bonâ fides* of the proposal, which would be a deplorable beginning, yet one easily to be avoided.

Regard being had to the points raised in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, we consider that restrictive franchise legislation, apparently designed to exclude for ever the great bulk of the Uitlander population, dates its beginning from the Session of 1890;[1] and as various enactments bearing on this question have been passed by successive Volksraads expressing their power to alter, add to, or revoke previous enactments, and as the same powers are to the full enjoyed by the present Volksraad, it would be possible and proper for the present Volksraad to annul all the legislation upon this subject from that date, and to restore and confirm the status prior to 1890, and thus satisfy the claims of the country under certain conditions, from the benefits of which they could not properly be excluded.

With regard to paragraph 5, a moderate proposal, designed to give a more equitable distribution of representatives in the Raad, would be necessary.

The above suggestions are not put forward as the irreducible minimum, nor are they designed for public use, nor intended as a proposal acceptable to the eye but impossible in fact, and thus sure of reduction. They are put forward in good faith, as indicating, in our opinion, the lines upon which it would be possible to work towards a settlement, with a reasonable prospect of success. If the difficulties appear great, the more reason there is not to put forward an unalterable proposal, foredoomed to failure, but rather to try and find points of agreement which, however few and small to begin with, would surely make for an eventual and complete settlement. In any case, it is clear that the mere fact of a proposal to extend the franchise having been made by the Government, thus frankly recognising the need to deal with the subject, will be hailed as a good omen and a good beginning by all fair-minded men.

Without much delay the Government, by the pen of the State Secretary, repudiated any official cognizance of the Conference. Messrs. Reitz, Leyds, and Smuts, who were the Executive subject to Mr. Kruger, declared that they were 'acting on their own initiative, and not as representing the Government.' With some naïveté they admit in their letter to the Uitlander representative that:[2]

[1] That is, five years before the Raid.

[2] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 219.

From your side we desired a more friendly attitude in the press, because we were convinced that the exaggerated press campaign in newspapers—which are generally stated to be owned or influenced by you—which, however much it might promote private interests, was nevertheless calculated to cause an endless amount of evil to the lasting interests of all sections of the community. By the continual and perpetual instigation (? irritation) and suspicion caused by the newspapers, the public mind was constantly held in a state of insecurity, and by the continual propagation of race hatred the Government and Legislature were prevented from improving the state and the position of the so-called Uitlanders with respect to the old population.

With regard to the appearance in the *Times* of a report of these discussions, Mr. Reitz has something very significant to say.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to a matter which has caused me great regret. It was clearly understood and arranged that our mutual communications regarding these important matters should be considered confidential and be kept secret, as naturally discussions of such a serious nature cannot be carried on upon the housetops with good fruits.

What has happened, however?

I received your communication, at present under consideration, on March 28, and already on April 3, while I had it still under serious consideration and took all care to keep it secret, the contents thereof appeared in the London *Times*, while a few days ago your reply appeared verbatim in the *Cape Times*, *Diamond-Fields Advertiser*, and other such papers under capitalist influence.

The manner in which these papers, well disposed to you or controlled by you, have dealt with your communication, caused me (I acknowledge it with bitterness) to doubt your good faith for a moment. Thinking, however, of the great interests at present in the balance, as it were, and believing that you would never for private and party purposes play the fool with the true and lasting interests of all sections of our inhabitants in this manner, I cannot do otherwise than think that your reply was published by means of one of your subordinates. It only causes me deep regret that you did not, with a view to our agreement, immediately publicly repudiate this publication as a gross violation of confidence. I would deeply regret it if, where there are so few true points of difference between us, they would nevertheless bar the way to a lasting understanding on account of wrong and indiscreet tactics, and continue to expect that the hand extended to you so well-meaningly and in absolute good faith will not be pushed aside wilfully.

The good faith invoked by Mr. Reitz was manifested by the response of the Government to an appeal by the Uitlanders for an opportunity to discuss the points arising out of the correspondence. The representatives of the Uitlanders resolved that:

In view of the public interest evoked by the recently-published correspondence passed between the State Secretary (Mr. Reitz) and certain leading financial houses in Johannesburg, this meeting deem it desirable

to convene a public meeting of the inhabitants of Johannesburg for the purpose of openly and dispassionately discussing the principal points arising out of the said correspondence, and that, as no suitable building exists for holding such meeting, the permission of Government be obtained to hold such meeting in the open air on Saturday next, the 15th inst.

To which the following curt reply was received:

The Government will not give permission for holding a meeting of such a nature. Gentlemen are at liberty to hold a meeting in a building in terms of Law 6 of 1894.

The Uitlanders retorted by a resolution dated April 12, that,

the Government having refused permission to hold a public open-air meeting (notwithstanding that the previous resolution submitted to the First Landdrost distinctly pointed out that there was no suitable building in town in which to hold such meeting), the committee hereby records its disappointment and apprehension of the grave consequences that may follow the refusal of free and open discussion of important public questions involved, more especially in view of the fact that in the communication from the State Secretary to M. G. Rouliot and the other representatives of financial houses in Johannesburg, dated April 10 1899, he stated that the question of the Franchise and Political Redistribution should properly be referred to the general public.

The representatives of the financiers naturally replied to the charges of bad faith brought against them by the State Secretary:

Certain of our statements (they observe in a letter bearing date April 14) being doubted and described as erroneous in your letter, we deem it advisable to go more fully into the facts which have preceded and led to this correspondence.

It may be that communications exchanged through an intermediary have been transmitted in a manner liable to convey a different impression from what was actually meant, and, in order to clear any possible misunderstanding, we beg to enclose copies of all documents supplied to us by Mr. Lippert, whom we at all times considered as your authorized agent.

From these it will be apparent that during the negotiations we acted in perfect good faith, communicating and discussing what we justly considered were the wishes and proposals of the Government, and it will also be clear to you that every one of our statements is based on documents which we had every reason to believe were approved of by the Government.

On February 27 Mr. Lippert called together Messrs. E. Birkenruth, A. Brakhan, and G. Rouliot, to whom he stated that a settlement of certain pending questions could probably be arrived at. He said that he had ascertained the views of Dr. Leyds, Messrs. Reitz and Smuts, who had agreed to a certain programme, and he wanted to know whether we would be willing to open negotiations on that basis, in which case the

three officials mentioned would see the State President, and ascertain whether he would be prepared to adopt their views. . . .

On March 1 Mr. Lippert informed us that the State President was viewing the matter favourably, and requested us to acquaint our friends by cable. . . .

On March 12 Mr. Lippert communicated to us what he termed the definite proposals of the Government of the South African Republic, which were duly cabled to our friends in Europe. . . .

We beg to point out to you that by cabling these proposals to Europe we could not possibly conceive that we were acting under a misconception, as the day on which they were made to us—the 12th of March, being a Sunday—the telegraph-office was specially kept open for the purpose of despatching the cables, which were duly received and forwarded upon production of an order from Mr. Lippert.

And in conclusion they say:

We beg to refer to the publication of our previous letter to you. It took place here on the 6th inst. in the afternoon. We immediately instituted an inquiry, and on the 8th inst., in the morning, we wrote that we were in a position to assure you that we could in no way be held responsible for the publication. We never for a moment doubted your good faith, nor that of the other gentlemen for whom the letter was meant, but thought that possibly the communication could have been made through one of your subordinates. However, not being certain of the fact, we merely repudiated any responsibility on our part, and regret that you should publicly have laid the blame on our side without having communicated with us, asking for an explanation if you had any suspicion.

We beg to assure you that we are as willing as ever to co-operate with you in arriving at a settlement of all pending differences, in order to secure peace and prosperity in this country, and we shall be ready at all times to meet and discuss with you or any other delegates of the Government any matter likely to bring about a speedy and permanent solution of all questions, still bearing in mind what we mentioned in our previous correspondence, that we are not qualified to speak on behalf of the whole community.

With this communication was forwarded Mr. Lippert's memorandum for the basis of an understanding between the Government and the financiers. It is brief, significant, and requires no comment:

1. Cessation of press agitation here and in Europe.
2. Support on the Coolie Question.
3. Settlement of the Dynamite Question.
4. Loan (if required).
5. Severance from the South African League.
6. Appointment of State Financier and State Auditor of European reputation, with a seat and vote on the Executive in all questions of finance.
7. No new taxation of mines until submitted by Minister of Finance.
8. Moderate valuation of bewaarplaatsen.
9. Burgher rights—five years—property test.

From the preceding pages it can be easily ascertained how far the war was promoted by capitalists. It is true that there were Englishmen amongst them, but, taken as a body, the capitalists were a cosmopolitan crew, who cared nothing whatever for the colour of the flag under which they made money, and had no interests in politics except in so far as politics meant business. We have seen long ago that it was not the rich, but the poor, not the financier, but the working miner, who started the Reform Movement in Johannesburg. The capitalists were concerned with this movement only in so far as they were wise enough to realize that a thoroughly discontented labouring class would prove to be a greater danger to their material interests than a narrow reactionary and corrupt oligarchy. I have little doubt that, if the capitalists had been given the choice between the two evils without regard to their respective magnitudes, they would have plumped solidly in favour of an administration which, however short-sighted, was squeezable and accessible to bribes. The disaffection, however, of the working-classes was one certain to grow, and equally certain to produce results far more detrimental than the restrictions and exactions of the oligarchy.

It is admitted on all hands that the famous despatch of Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain, bearing date May 4, 1899, marked the beginning of the last stage of the controversy before it was closed by the declaration of war. In that memorable document there is not a word of complaint as to the wrongs of the capitalists as such. I will not say that Lord Milner took the same rather indifferent view of capitalist grievances which I do; but it was, as will be seen from the following despatch, in the wrongs of the Uitlander working-classes that he saw the fountain-head of irreconcilable differences between the Transvaal and the British Government:[1]

Having regard to critical character of South African situation and likelihood of early reply by Her Majesty's Government to petition, I am telegraphing remarks which under ordinary circumstances I should have made by despatch. Events of importance have followed so fast on each other since my return to South Africa, and my time has been so occupied

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 209.

in dealing with each incident severally, that I have had no opportunity for reviewing the whole position.

The present crisis undoubtedly arises out of the Edgar incident. But that incident merely precipitated a struggle which was certain to come It is possible to make too much of the killing of Edgar. It was a shocking and, in my judgment, a criminal blunder, such as would have excited a popular outcry anywhere. It was made much worse by the light way in which it was first dealt with by the Public Prosecutor and by the attitude of the Judge at the trial. By itself, however, it would not have justified, nor, in fact, provoked, the present storm. But it happened to touch a particularly sore place. There is no grievance which rankles more in the breasts of the mass of the Uitlander population than the conduct of the police, who, while they have proved singularly incompetent to deal with gross scandals like the illicit liquor trade, are harsh and arbitrary in their treatment of individuals whom they happen to dislike, as must have become evident to you from the recurrent ill-treatment of coloured people. There are absolutely no grounds for supposing that the excitement which the death of Edgar caused was factitious. It has been laid to the door of the South African League, but the officials of the League were forced into action by Edgar's fellow-workmen. And, the consideration of grievances once started by the police grievance, it was inevitable that the smouldering but profound discontent of the population, who constantly find their affairs mismanaged, their protests disregarded, and their attitude misunderstood by a Government on which they have absolutely no means of exercising any influence, should once more break into flame.

We have, therefore, simply to deal with a popular movement of a similar kind to that of 1894 and 1895 before it was perverted and ruined by a conspiracy of which the great body of the Uitlanders were totally innocent. None of the grievances then complained of, and which then excited universal sympathy, have been remedied, and others have been added. The case is much stronger. It is impossible to overlook the tremendous change for the worse which has been effected by the lowering of the status of the High Court of Judicature and by the establishment of the principle embodied in the new draft Grondwet, that any resolution of the Volksraad is equivalent to a law. The instability of the laws has always been one of the most serious grievances. The new Constitution provides for their permanent instability, the Judges being bound by their oath to accept every Volksraad resolution as equally binding with a law passed in the regular form and with the provisions of the Constitution itself. The law prescribing this oath is one of which the present Chief Justice said that no self-respecting man could sit on the Bench while it was on the Statute Book. Formerly the foreign population, however bitterly they might resent the action of the Legislature and of the Administration, had yet confidence in the High Court of Judicature. It cannot be expected that they should feel the same confidence to-day. Seeing no hope in any other quarter, a number of Uitlanders who happen to be British subjects have addressed a petition to Her Majesty the Queen. I have already expressed my opinion of its substantial genuineness and the absolute *bonâ fides* of its promoters. But the petition is only one proof among many of the profound discontent of the unenfranchised population, who are a great majority of the white inhabitants of the State.

The public meeting of January 14 was, indeed, broken up by workmen, many of them poor burghers, in the employment of the Government, and instigated by Government officials, and it is impossible at present to

hold another meeting of a great size. Open-air meetings are prohibited by law, and by one means or another all large public buildings have been rendered unavailable. But smaller meetings are being held almost nightly along the Rand, and are unanimous in their demand for enfranchisement. The movement is steadily growing in force and extent.

With regard to the attempts to represent that movement as artificial, the work of scheming capitalists or professional agitators, I regard it as a wilful perversion of the truth. The defenceless people who are clamouring for a redress of grievances are doing so at great personal risk. It is notorious that many capitalists regard political agitation with disfavour because of its effect on markets. It is equally notorious that the lowest class of Uitlanders, and especially the illicit liquor dealers, have no sympathy whatever with the cause of reform. Moreover, there are in all classes a considerable number who only want to make money and clear out, and who, while possibly sympathizing with reform, feel no great interest in a matter which may only concern them temporarily. But a very large and constantly increasing proportion of the Uitlanders are not birds of passage. They contemplate a long residence in the country or to make it their permanent home. These people are the mainstay of the Reform Movement, as they are of the prosperity of the country. They would make excellent citizens if they had the chance.

A busy, industrial community is not naturally prone to political unrest; but they bear the chief burden of taxation. They constantly feel in their business and daily lives the effects of chaotic local legislation and of incompetent and unsympathetic administration. They have many grievances, but they believe all this could be gradually removed if they had only a fair share of political power. This is the meaning of their vehement demand for enfranchisement. Moreover, they are mostly British subjects, accustomed to a free system and equal rights; they feel deeply the personal indignity involved in position of permanent subjection to the ruling caste, which owes its wealth and power to their exertion. The political turmoil in the Transvaal Republic will never end till the permanent Uitlander population is admitted to a share in the Government, and while that turmoil lasts there will be no tranquillity or adequate progress in Her Majesty's South African dominions.

The relations between the British colonies and the two Republics are intimate to a degree which one must live in South Africa in order fully to realize. Socially, economically, ethnologically, they are all one country. The two principal white races are everywhere inextricably mixed up. It is absurd for either to dream of subjugating the other. The only condition on which they can live in harmony and the country progress is equality all round. South Africa can prosper under two, three, or six Governments, but not under two absolutely conflicting social and political systems—perfect equality for Dutch and British in the British colonies side by side with permanent subjection of British to Dutch in one of the Republics. It is idle to talk of peace and unity under such a state of affairs.

It is this which makes the internal condition of the Transvaal Republic a matter of vital interest to Her Majesty's Government. No merely local question affects so deeply the welfare and peace of her own South African possessions. And the right of Great Britain to intervene to secure fair treatment of the Uitlanders is fully equal to her supreme interest in securing it. The majority of them are her subjects, whom she is bound to protect. But the enormous number of British subjects, the endless series of their grievances, and the nature of those grievances, which are not less serious because they are not individually sensational, makes

protection by the ordinary diplomatic means impossible. We are, as you know, for ever remonstrating about this, that and the other injury to British subjects. Only in rare cases and only when we are very emphatic do we obtain any redress. The sore between us and the Transvaal Republic is thus inevitably kept up, while the result in the way of protection to our subjects is lamentably small. For these reasons it has been, as you know, my constant endeavour to reduce the number of our complaints. I may sometimes have abstained when I ought to have protested, from my great dislike of ineffectual nagging. But I feel that the attempt to remedy the hundred and one wrongs springing from a hopeless system by taking up isolated cases is perfectly vain. It may easily lead to war, but will never lead to real improvement.

The true remedy is to strike at the root of all these injuries—the political impotence of the injured. What diplomatic protests will never accomplish, a fair measure of Uitlander representation would gradually but surely bring about. It seems a paradox, but it is true, that the only effective way of protecting our subjects is to help them to cease to be our subjects. The admission of Uitlanders to a fair share of political power would no doubt give stability to the Republic. But it would at the same time remove most of our causes of difference with it, and modify, and in the long-run entirely remove, that intense suspicion and bitter hostility to Great Britain which at present dominates its internal and external policy.

The case for intervention is overwhelming. The only attempted answer is that things will right themselves if left alone. But, in fact, the policy of leaving things alone has been tried for years, and it has led to their going from bad to worse. It is not true that this is owing to the Raid; they were going from bad to worse before the Raid. We were on the verge of war before the Raid, and the Transvaal was on the verge of revolution. The effect of the Raid has been to give the policy of leaving things alone a new lease of life, and with the old consequences.

The spectacle of thousands of British subjects kept permanently in the position of helots, constantly chafing under undoubted grievances, and calling vainly to Her Majesty's Government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain and the respect for the British Government within the Queen's dominions. A certain section of the press, not in the Transvaal only, preaches openly and constantly the doctrine of a Republic embracing all South Africa, and supports it by menacing references to the armaments of the Transvaal, its alliance with the Orange Free State, and the active sympathy which, in case of war, it would receive from a section of Her Majesty's subjects. I regret to say that this doctrine, supported as it is by a ceaseless stream of malignant lies about the intentions of the British Government, is producing a great effect upon a large number of our Dutch fellow-colonists. Language is frequently used which seems to imply that the Dutch have some superior right even in this colony to their fellow-citizens of British birth. Thousands of men peaceably disposed, and, if left alone, perfectly satisfied with their position as British subjects, are being drawn into disaffection, and there is a corresponding exasperation on the side of the British.

I can see nothing which will put a stop to this mischievous propaganda but some striking proof of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government not to be ousted from its position in South Africa. And the best proof alike of its power and its justice would be to obtain for the Uitlanders in the Transvaal a fair share in the Government of the country which owes everything to their exertions. It could be made perfectly

clear that our action was not directed against the existence of the Republic. We should only be demanding the re-establishment of rights which now exist in the Orange Free State, and which existed in the Transvaal itself at the time of, and long after, the withdrawal of British sovereignty. It would be no selfish demand, as other Uitlanders besides those of British birth would benefit by it. It is asking for nothing from others which we do not give ourselves. And it would certainly go to the root of the political unrest in South Africa, and, though temporarily it might aggravate, it would ultimately extinguish the race feud which is the great bane of the country.

The significance of this despatch is enhanced by an unpleasant episode which had preceded it. Lord Milner had left South Africa on November 2 of the preceding year, partly to secure a respite from the continued strain of worries to which a High Commissioner in critical times is exposed, but chiefly to discuss verbally with the Colonial Secretary the state of affairs in South Africa. The position of *locum tenens* was filled, according to the Constitution, by the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in South Africa. This arrangement was a relic of the times when the duties of the Governor of Cape Colony, usually entrusted to a soldier, consisted mainly of protecting subjects of the Crown from inroads or rebellions by native tribes. In such circumstances the appointment of one soldier to succeed another in the discharge of the duties attached to the Government office was not unreasonable. But for many years past the functions of the representative of the Crown in Cape Colony had become more and more those of the statesman rather than of the soldier. The old arrangement, in accordance with our conservative habits, was still retained, though its justification had disappeared, and it worked well enough so long as the Acting Governor confined himself to the performance of such tasks as were of an administrative character, and did not concern himself with the policy to which his temporarily-absent chief was committed. In the interest of the army, no less than of the Empire, it was manifestly desirable that the limitations of the *locum tenens* should be strictly observed. Otherwise, of course, before a distinguished officer was appointed to the South African command, it would have been necessary to examine his political credentials, lest the representative of the Sovereign in South Africa should be found in flagrant antagonism with the advisers of the Sovereign at

home. Until the appointment of Sir William Butler this difficulty had never arisen. He was known to be a capable soldier, and the question of his politics had never entered into the minds of those to whom he owed his appointment. Most people were aware that Sir William Butler was a Home Ruler in domestic politics, and they vaguely recalled a notorious civil case which had occurred a few years before, in which Sir William Butler had figured not too creditably, and the circumstances of which had induced a jury to attach to their verdict a rider of censure such as has been rarely passed on a British officer. Fortunately for this country, facts such as these are easily forgotten, and as a rule a man's fitness for his post is scrutinized solely on the grounds of the capacity he has exhibited for his specific duties. That Sir William Butler was a capable soldier no one disputed. Whether he was a sound and trustworthy statesman no one had ever troubled to inquire. His position in South Africa resembled that of a clergyman who had suddenly and unexpectedly been called in to take the duties of another who was unavoidably debarred from undertaking them himself. In a sudden emergency no man would stop to ask whether the temporary stopgap held the same theological views as the clergyman for whom he was acting as substitute. Were such a *locum tenens* to take advantage of his brief authority to give expression to evangelical prejudices in a church of ritualistic tendencies, and to sweep away all the emblems and symbols sacred to the High Churchman, and to trample them under foot as badges of idolatry, his conduct would hardly receive the approbation even of the party in the Church like-minded with himself. *Mutatis mutandis*—this was the line adopted by Sir William Butler. He had not at that time written his 'Life of Sir George Pomeroy Colley,' in which he demonstrated his sympathy with the Dutch population in the struggle for supremacy with the Boers. His feelings on that subject may be gathered from the book to which I have referred. Two passages from it may be given as illustrations:

Colley (he says) reached Pretoria on July 16, and stayed there four

days. In this interval he received the Acting President Joubert and other officials.

'I had some interviews with the Acting President, and settled amicably some little matters between our two Governments. Before leaving, he gave me a sort of banquet of honour, which was cooked by his wife, whose flushed face could be seen peering through the kitchen door now and again to see how we were getting on, and served by his son, who waited on us.'

In reading these sentences so full of the simple homestead life of these Dutch farmers, it is impossible to prevent the mind running on to a day a few years forward when this same President Joubert will be Commandant-General of the Boer forces, barring the road into the Transvaal against Colley's little army at Laing's Nek. There is another significant passage in this letter:

'At Pretoria I was most hospitably received by all the Dutch residents. There, as in most of the Transvaal towns, the bulk of the population and all the principal merchants and traders are English, and look forward to this country coming under English rule in some form or another.'[1]

And then Sir William Butler adds words which have a fresh significance to-day:

How long shall we continue to confuse the talk of the South African town with the feeling of the South African country? 'Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chirp,' wrote Burke more than a century ago, 'while many great cattle repose under the shadow of the trees, chew the cud, and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field.'[2]

And later on, in the same volume, speaking of the overthrow of Lord Beaconsfield's Government in 1880, Sir William Butler says:[3]

We can judge, then, the feelings with which the Dutch population, not only of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, but throughout South Africa, received the intelligence that the Liberal Government on assuming the reins of authority had deliberately resolved to maintain the annexation, a decision which at once placed them in a position infinitely more difficult than that of their predecessors in office, who had at least pretended to regard the annexation as an act approved by a majority of the white inhabitants of the Transvaal, while the present possessors of power had long repudiated any such pretension, and had openly avowed their belief in the injustice of that measure. The feelings of the Boers became more than ever exasperated at finding themselves the dupes of the new Government, as before they had considered themselves the victims of the old.

And he adds a sentence which reads curiously in the light of Sir William Butler's subsequent action as *locum tenens* for Lord Milner:

[1] 'General Sir George P. Colley,' p. 138. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 251.

In this duality and division of directing authority (he says) lay the chief danger of the situation, and doubly was it dangerous when the contrasted characters of the two men—High Commissioner and Administrator—were taken into account.

Sir William Butler's acquaintance with the politics of South Africa was apparently of no more recent date than that of twenty years ago. He was not even in South Africa at the time of Lord Milner's departure for England. Sir W. Goodenough had been Commander-in-Chief, and his sudden death left the charge of the high commissionership for a few weeks in the hands of Major-General Cox, pending the arrival of General Sir William Butler. Without taking time to study the position or to familiarize himself with the attitude of the Governor whose position he was accidentally filling, Sir William Butler threw himself absolutely into the arms of the Afrikander party, and treated as unscrupulous intriguers the principal members of the South African League in Johannesburg. A more wanton affront, and one less well justified, was never put upon men of British descent by a casual superior vested with a little brief authority. These facts must be borne in mind in studying the despatch from Lord Milner which I have given above. It must not be imagined that because this masterly State paper was committed to the cable, and not to the Governor's mail-bag, that it was in any respect a hasty or ill-considered production, or that it was not intended by its author to be made public. On the contrary, it represented the mature views of the High Commissioner which had been communicated to the Colonial Secretary during the former's visit to London, and which had been accentuated by the occurrences which had taken place in his absence, and by the treatment they received at the hands of his understudy. During that brief visit to England I had more than one opportunity of discussing the situation with Lord Milner, and I particularly remember the use of the word 'helot' to describe the position, not of the wealthy and transient money-makers of the Rand, but of the thousands of British working men who had sought a home in South Africa.

To resume, throughout this despatch there is not a

word which by any perverted imagination can be construed as an inspiration from the capitalists of the Rand. Lord Milner deals first with the Edgar case, into the merits of which it is needless now to enter, but of which he truly says:

> It was a shocking and, in my judgment, a criminal, blunder, such as would have excited a popular outcry anywhere. It was made much worse by the light way in which it was first dealt with by the Public Prosecutor and by the attitude of the Judge at the trial. By itself, however, it would not have been justified, nor, in fact, provoked the present storm. But it happened to touch a particularly sore place.

Now, this sore place was to be found, not, if I may be pardoned the expression, on the head of the Uitlander body in the Transvaal, but on its humbler members. The rich capitalist was not in his own person much affected by the insolence and insubordination of the police. After the fashion of Johannesburg, the rich man could always square the 'zarp' and his administrative superiors. The workingmen had no such means of self-protection. And so, as Lord Milner points out, 'there are absolutely no grounds for supposing that the excitement which the death of Edgar caused was factitious. It has been laid to the door of the South African League, but the officials of the League were forced into action by Edgar's fellow-workmen.'

If there was any one incident in the history of South African troubles which could be attributed to the capitalists as distinguished from the rest of the Uitlander population, it was the Raid, and on this point Lord Milner says:

> We have, therefore, simply to deal with a popular movement of a similar kind to that of 1894 and 1895 before it was perverted and ruined by a conspiracy of which the great body of the Uitlanders were totally innocent.

Such a reference was calculated to offend rather than to attract the large number of capitalists who were implicated in that conspiracy. And it was not of the capitalists that Lord Milner was writing when he said:

> Seeing no hope in any other quarter, a number of Uitlanders, who happen to be British subjects, have addressed a petition to Her Majesty the Queen. I have already expressed my opinion of its substantial genuineness and the absolute *bonâ-fides* of its promoters. But the petition is only one proof among many of the profound discontent of the unenfranchised population, who are a great majority of the white inhabitants of the State.

And if this were not specific enough, Lord Milner went on to say:

With regard to the attempts to represent that movement as artificial, the work of scheming capitalists or professional agitators, I regard it as a wilful perversion of the truth. The defenceless people who are clamouring for a redress of grievances are doing so at great personal risk. *It is notorious*[1] *that many capitalists regard political agitation with disfavour because of its effect on markets. It is equally notorious that the lowest class of Uitlanders, and especially the illicit liquor dealers, have no sympathy whatever with the cause of reform.* Moreover, there are in all classes a considerable number who only want to make money and clear out, and who, while possibly sympathizing with reform, feel no great interest in a matter which may only concern them temporarily. *But a very large and constantly increasing proportion of the Uitlanders are not birds of passage. They contemplate a long residence in the country or to make it their permanent home. These people are the mainstay of the Reform Movement, as they are of the prosperity of the country. They would make excellent citizens if they had the chance.*

Nothing could be clearer than this distinction, though of course it does not imply antagonism, between the capitalists and the employés. It is with the wrongs of the latter that Lord Milner, as was to be expected from his antecedents, was mainly concerned.

They are (he said) mostly British subjects accustomed to a free system and equal rights; they feel deeply the personal indignity involved in position of permanent subjection to the ruling caste, which owes its wealth and power to their exertion. The political turmoil in the Transvaal Republic will never end till the *permanent Uitlander population* is admitted to a share in the Government, and while that turmoil lasts there will be no tranquillity or adequate progress in Her Majesty's South African dominions.

But it was not only the wrongs of the white working classes of Johannesburg and of the consequences which would result from continued refusal of redress that exercised Lord Milner's mind. It cannot be too often repeated that in South Africa the political boundaries are entirely artificial. Sir George Grey had pointed out that elementary fact forty years before Lord Milner reiterated it. It was impossible for a political disease to exist in one part of South Africa without affecting the whole of the rest. The triumph of Krugerism in the South African Republic meant the spread of Krugerism through the length and breadth of South Africa.

[1] The italics in these quotations are mine.

Socially, economically, ethnologically, they are all one country, the two principal white races are everywhere inextricably mixed up. It is absurd for either to dream of subjugating the other. The only condition on which they can live in harmony and the country progress is equality all round. South Africa can prosper under two, three, or six Governments, but not under two absolutely conflicting social and political systems—perfect equality for Dutch and British in the British colonies side by side with permanent subjection of British to Dutch in one of the Republics. It is idle to talk of peace and unity under such a state of affairs.

That is the keynote, as it has been the object of this work to prove, to the whole situation. There never was an epoch when men of British descent who had settled in South Africa attempted to crush the Dutch inhabitants under their heel. On the other hand, there was never a time when the Franco-Dutch settlers in South Africa did not regard their British neighbours as intruders and invaders. The system which the British authorities, in spite of constant vacillations and backslidings, endeavoured to establish in South Africa was the system recognised by the Anglo-Saxon race whether it found itself in dependence on the British Crown or whether it set up for itself, as in the case of the United States of America. The existence of two systems in the United States, previous to the war of secession, was accidental rather than essential. But accident as it was, it brought about a collision, the consequence of which involved the absolute suppression of one system and the unchallenged recognition of the other. It was the same in South Africa. Of our right to save British subjects from the wrongs resultant on the triumph of the Dutch system, there is no question. That system, as carried out in the South African Republic, owed its toleration, and, indeed, its very existence, to British magnanimity. The nature of our authority over communities to which we had granted autonomy might not adequately be described by the term 'suzerainty.' The thing, however, as Lord Derby had said, in justifying the omission of the word from the Convention of 1884, remained unimpaired. We were, therefore, entitled to protect British subjects from suffering grievances due to the abuse of rights which we had ourselves conferred.

We are (said Lord Milner) for ever remonstrating about this, that

and the other injury to British subjects. Only in rare cases, and only when we are very emphatic, do we obtain any redress. The sore between us and the Transvaal Republic is thus inevitably kept up, while the result in the way of protection to our subjects is lamentably small. For these reasons it has been, as you know, my constant endeavour to reduce the number of our complaints. I may sometimes have abstained when I ought to have protested, from my great dislike of ineffectual nagging. But I feel that the attempt to remedy the hundred and one wrongs springing from a hopeless system by taking up isolated cases is perfectly vain. It may easily lead to war, but will never lead to real improvement.

Now, the remedy which Lord Milner proposed for these evils, which are admitted to-day by every pro-Boer to be real, was one within the power of Mr. Kruger to apply, without loss of prestige or dignity, and without impairing the independence of his country.

The true remedy (said Lord Milner) is to strike at the root of all these injuries, the political impotence of the injured. What diplomatic protests will never accomplish a fair measure of Uitlander representation would gradually but surely bring about. It seems a paradox, but it is true, that the only effective way of protecting our subjects is to help them to cease to be our subjects. The admission of Uitlanders to a fair share of political power would no doubt give stability to the Republic; but it would at the same time remove most of our causes of difference with it, and modify, and in the long-run entirely remove, that intense suspicion and bitter hostility to Great Britain which at present dominates its internal and external policy.

That is the remedy suggested by the statesman who, according to his traducers, had deliberately entered into a conspiracy with Mr. Chamberlain on the one hand and the capitalists of the Rand on the other, to destroy the independence of the South African Republic and to incorporate the Rand and all its wealth in the dominions of the Queen. Curious indeed were the means which Lord Milner adopted to carry out the conspiracy, supposing it to have existed. In the first place, the embodiment of the Uitlander population (which did not love and had no reason to love the Imperial factor) in the body politic of the South African Republic, would have established upon an immutable basis the independence of the Transvaal. Men of British descent, voluntarily transmuted into burghers of the Republic, would have viewed, with even more suspicion than their Dutch fellow-burghers, any attempt on the part of the Imperial Government to tamper with their newly-acquired

rights. On the other hand, the capitalists would have found themselves confronted by a Raad in which their employés would have had a predominant voice. The new-comers who immigrated in search of wealth would have had little sympathy with the policy of men whose ideals were summed up in the significant expression 'freeze out.' If Mr. Chamberlain was a land-grabbing conspirator, and the capitalists were gold-grabbing conspirators, and had selected Lord Milner as the third of a trinity bent upon confiscation, it can only be said that they showed lamentable want of discretion in the choice of their partner. The scheme of reform as outlined in this despatch and developed at the Bloemfontein Conference would have been fatal to the projects both of Mr. Chamberlain and of the capitalists on the hypothesis that they were such as it is the fashion of pro-Boers to represent them as having been.

The charge of undue precipitancy which has been levelled against Lord Milner is anticipated and answered in this despatch. Lord Milner at the time of writing it had been two years in South Africa, studying the problem at first hand. Until twelve months had elapsed from his arrival he never opened his lips except for the utterance of those ceremonial speeches which are expected of the representative of the Crown. When he did break a self-imposed silence, it was to make a despairing effort to induce the Dutch inhabitants of Cape Colony themselves to stem the rising flood of Krugerism, and if possible to dam it at its fountain-head. The response to that appeal was the election of the nominees of the Afrikander Bond in sufficient numbers to form a slight majority in the Cape Parliament. The organs of that party, instead of exercising a moderating influence over the councils of Pretoria, applauded every reactionary step, and encouraged President Kruger in his defiance of British advice and his resistance to British pressure. Once more a constitutional effort had been made by the Uitlanders themselves to secure a redress of their grievances. Like all previous attempts in the same direction, it was received with scorn and contumely. The Uitlanders as a last resort had appealed to the Queen as suzerain in their capacity of dwellers in the Transvaal, as Sovereign in their capacity

of British subjects. To that appeal it was clear there must be an answer of some sort. Lord Milner's advice was plain and direct.

The case for intervention (he said) is overwhelming. The only attempted answer is that things will right themselves if left alone. But, in fact, the policy of leaving things alone has been tried for years, and it has led to their going from bad to worse. It is not true that this is owing to the Raid. They were going from bad to worse before the Raid. We were on the verge of war[1] before the Raid, and the Transvaal was on the verge of revolution. The effect of the Raid has been to give the policy of leaving things alone a new lease of life, and with the old consequences.

The spectacle of thousands of British subjects kept permanently in the position of helots, constantly chafing under undoubted grievances, and calling vainly to Her Majesty's Government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain and the respect for the British Government within the Queen's dominions. A certain section of the press, not in the Transvaal only, preaches openly and constantly the doctrine of a Republic embracing all South Africa, and supports it by menacing references to the armaments of the Transvaal, its alliance with the Orange Free State, and the active sympathy which in case of war it would receive from a section of Her Majesty's subjects. I regret to say that this doctrine, supported as it is by a ceaseless stream of malignant lies about the intentions of the British Government, is producing a great effect upon a large number of our Dutch fellow-colonists. Language is frequently used which seems to imply that the Dutch have some superior right even in this colony to their fellow-citizens of British birth. Thousands of men peaceably disposed, and, if left alone, perfectly satisfied with their position as British subjects, are being drawn into disaffection, and there is a corresponding exaggeration on the side of the British.

Probably no passage in the despatch has been more severely criticised than that which I have just quoted. Yet it would be impossible to find in our public archives any paragraph in any despatch which, tested line by line and word by word two years after it was penned, had been so completely justified by subsequent events. If exception be taken to the employment of the word 'helots,' it can only be taken on the ground that the expression understated the humiliating position occupied by the industrial Uitlanders. The Laconian helot was the hewer of wood and drawer of water for his Spartan master, but he was the representative of a conquered and inferior race offered the alternative of servitude for that of extinction. He had no rights save those which the conqueror offered to the vanquished, and he was not the member of a proud and powerful race capable of

[1] On the closing of the Drifts.

redressing his wrongs. The helot of ancient history was a man of suffrance. What was the position of the helot of the Transvaal? He was a free man, a member of a haughty race renowned in arms and passionate in its love of freedom; of a race which had, from magnanimity as some hold, or in a rare moment of weakness as others have it, conceded autonomy to the people who now denied him the elementary rights of a free man. He was not in the Transvaal as the representative of a conquered people. He had come there on the invitation of the Governors of the country to apply to the exploitation of its wealth the skill, the industry and the intelligence which the burghers either did not possess or were too indolent to exert. He had left a splendid land where the atmosphere of free institutions was as the breath of his nostrils, and he found himself in a land of white men three centuries behind him in civilization and progress, by whom he was treated with less consideration than the serfs had been in Russia. He saw that the wealth he extracted from the mines was being employed to manufacture fresh manacles, to cramp and fetter his individual liberty. It was true that he was free to go away, but he had been induced to sacrifice his prospects at home and to give the best years of his life to the Transvaal on the strength of promises which were never fulfilled, and with the conviction that he carried with him everywhere the inalienable rights of the Civis Britannicus. Was he to wait for redress till accumulated wrongs had driven him into impotent rebellion, with the inevitable result of being shot down unarmed by the Mausers which his exertions had placed in the hands of his oppressors? That, however, was not all. The impression made upon the Dutch subjects of the Queen by the spectacle of Englishmen reduced to the position of serfs under their very eyes was demoralizing and dangerous. They had always in some mysterious way persuaded themselves that they had rights to the soil of South Africa superior to those of their fellow-citizens of British birth. They did not care to remember the days when their fathers were the Uitlanders under the oligarchic rule of the Dutch East India Company, nor the fact that it was to England they owed the free institutions under which they lived. They only saw in the oppression of

Englishmen by their own fellow-countrymen in the Transvaal an addition proof that they, the hybrid descendants of Hollander and Huguenot, and what Dr. Theal has called 'the sweepings and scum of Europe,' were a peculiar people chosen by the Lord to possess South Africa. If this insolent assumption of superiority had been allowed to progress unchecked, the result might have been other than they anticipated, but it would certainly have spelled the extermination of British supremacy. In such circumstances it would have been well within the rights of the paramount Power to have demanded peremptorily the disarmament of the Transvaal and the destruction of the fortresses which existed only to menace British power or to overawe British subjects, and to have called upon the Transvaal without any assignment of reasons to place the Uitlander upon exactly the same footing as that to which men of Dutch birth were admitted in the British colonies.

And yet Lord Milner was far indeed from advising that matters should be carried to this extreme.

> I can see nothing (he said) which will put a stop to this mischievous propaganda but some striking proof of the intention of Her Majesty's Government not to be ousted from its position in South Africa. And the best proof alike of its power and its justice would be to obtain for the Uitlanders in the Transvaal a fair share in the government of the country which owes everything to their exertions. It could be made perfectly clear that our action was not directed against the existence of the Republic. We should only be demanding the re-establishment of rights which now exist in the Orange Free State, and which existed in the Transvaal itself at the time of, and long after, the withdrawal of British sovereignty. It would be no selfish demand, as other Uitlanders besides those of British birth would benefit by it. It is asking for nothing from others which we do not give ourselves. And it would certainly go to the root of the political unrest in South Africa, and, though temporarily it might aggravate, it would ultimately extinguish the race feud which is the great bane of the country.

The date of that despatch was May 5, 1899. It was published immediately on its receipt by Mr. Chamberlain, and was in substance telegraphed back to South Africa. Its immediate effect upon the more intelligent Dutchmen, whose hearts, to use their own expression, 'were with the Bond, while their heads were with the British,' was remarkable. They realized that the hour had come and the man. The hour had come when it was no longer possible to toy with

the cry of 'Africa for the Afrikanders' in the limited sense in which the term 'Afrikander' was universally understood. And the man had come who saw that beneath a specious lip-loyalty there existed a deep-rooted and determined ambition to throw off the substance, if not the shadow, of British authority in South Africa. The first step taken by the wire-pullers of the Afrikander Bond was to press Mr. Schreiner, the Prime Minister, to propose a conference between the High Commissioner and the Presidents of the two Republics. To the motives of the persons who suggested the step I will recur presently. For the moment I am concerned to show how in their heart of hearts the most enlightened Dutchmen endorsed the views expressed by Lord Milner in his famous despatch of May 5. Sir Henry de Villiers, the Chief Justice of Cape Colony, was an Afrikander of Afrikanders. He combined the best blood of both the races which had contributed to the formation of the Afrikander race. He had never disguised his sympathy with the Boers, and, as he himself admits, it was his influence which induced the British Commissioners to sign the fatal Convention of Majuba.[1] The brother of Sir Henry de Villiers, Mr. Melius de Villiers, was Chief Justice of the Orange Free State, and it is to the confidential communications between the two brothers, a portion of which was captured on the occupation of Bloemfontein, that we owe our knowledge of the innermost thoughts of enlightened Dutchmen. The first letter, however, to which I refer was written by Sir Henry de Villiers, not to his brother, but to President Steyn. It is dated May 21, 1899, or a little less than three weeks after the publication of Lord Milner's despatch. It is in connection with this despatch that it should be read.

(*Private.*)

CAPE TOWN,
May 21, 1899.

MY DEAR PRESIDENT,

I must heartily congratulate you on having succeeded so far as to induce the Governor and President Kruger to arrange for a meeting at Bloemfontein. I do hope that you will also succeed in inducing them to come to an amicable settlement of all questions in dispute. I sometimes

[1] The official name for this Convention was that of Mount Prospect, but was so closely associated by events and in men's memories with the reverse of Majuba Hill that it will always be known by the name I have given to it in the text.

despair of peace in South Africa when I see how irritating and unjust the press is on the one side, and how stubborn the Transvaal Government is on the other.

On my recent visit to Pretoria I did not visit the President, as I considered it hopeless to think of making any impression on him; but I saw Reitz, Smuts, and Schalk Burger, who, I thought, would be amenable to argument, but I fear that either my advice had no effect on them, or else their opinion had no weight with the President.

I urged upon them to advise the President to open the Volksraad with promises of a liberal franchise and drastic reforms.

It would have been so much better if these had come voluntarily from the Government, instead of being gradually forced from them. In the former case they would rally the greater number of the malcontents around them; in the latter case no gratitude will be felt to the Republic for any concessions made by it. Besides, there can be no doubt that as the alien population increases, as it undoubtedly will, their demands will increase with their discontent, and ultimately a great deal more will have to be conceded than will now satisfy them. The franchise proposal made by the President seems to be simply ridiculous.

I am quite certain that if in 1881 *it had been known to my fellow-Commissioners that the President would adopt his retrogressive policy, neither President Brand nor I would ever have induced them to consent to sign the Convention. They would have advised the Secretary of State to let matters revert to the condition in which they were before peace was concluded—in other words, to recommence the war.*[1]

I enclose herewith an extract from the English Act of 1870 in regard to naturalization, which I have altered only so as to make it apply to the Transvaal. In England it is the Secretary of State to whom the application must be made. The veto of the President, which would, of course, have to be exercised *bonâ-fide*, would prevent any undesirable or disloyal persons from obtaining the franchise. The certificate of naturalization would entitle the holder to the franchise provided he had the requisite qualifications in other respects.

An offer by the Transvaal to accept the English law, with all its restrictions, could not possibly be refused. If, however, the restrictions be accepted by the Transvaal with an increase to more than five years, they would probably be rejected by the other side, ostensibly on the ground of the length of time required, but in reality on the ground of the restrictions.

If the five years' term were offered by the Transvaal, with a retrospective operation, the Uitlanders would be bound to take it, subject to the restrictions. I fear there would always still be a danger of the Volksraad revoking the gift before it has come into operation.

The recent law revoking the franchise given to persons who were actively loyal during the Jameson Raid, if the telegraphic reports are correct,[2] is a most ill-advised business. If some people got the franchise in a fraudulent manner, that might be a reason for appointing a Commission to inquire into the matter, but not for revoking the gift from all those who have obtained it. I cannot, however, believe the reports to be correct. I should despair of the country and South Africa if such legislation were still possible in the Transvaal.

I have always been a well-wisher to the Republic, and if I had any influence with the President I would advise him no longer to sit on the boiler to prevent it from bursting. Some safety-valves are required for

[1] The italics are mine.

[2] They were exaggerated.

the activities of the new population. In their irritation they abuse the Government, often unjustly, in the press, and send petitions to the Queen, but that was only to be expected. Let the Transvaal Legislature give them a liberal franchise and allow them local self-government for their towns, and some portion of the discontent will be allayed. The enemies of the Transvaal will not be satisfied ; on the contrary, the worst service that can be done to them is the redress of the grievance, but it is the friends of the country who should be considered. These, I am sure, will be found to be far greater in number than is suspected.

I should like to have said a word about the dynamite monopoly, but I fear I have already exhausted your patience. My sole object in writing is to preserve the peace of South Africa. There are, of course, many unreasonable demands ; but the President's position will be strengthened, and at all events his conscience will be clear in case of war, if he has done everything that can reasonably be expected from him. I feel sure that, having used your influence to bring him and Sir Alfred together, you will also do your best to make your efforts in favour of peace successful. *I feel sure also that Sir Alfred is anxious to make his mission a success, but there can be no success unless the arrangement arrived at is a permanent one, and not merely to tide over immediate difficulties.*[1]

Very sincerely yours,

J. H. DE VILLIERS.

The significance of this letter depends upon two things. The first, though not the most important, is the date. It was written after the Chief Justice had time to learn that the petition to the Queen was the bogus affair it was afterwards represented to be. Of this there is no suggestion. It was written also after the publication of Lord Milner's despatch, which it is now the fashion to describe as 'provocative'—a description the falsity of which is demonstrated by the closing words of this confidential letter, which I have emphasized. The second point is still more important. It is obvious from this letter that Sir Henry de Villiers believed absolutely in the good faith of President Steyn, and that he held that the sole object of the President of the Orange Free State was to secure peace in South Africa on an honourable and lasting basis. He had no idea that President Steyn was preparing at that moment to join President Kruger in throwing down the gauntlet to Great Britain. I have, however, in my possession the original of a reply to a letter from President Steyn importuning the Minister of War at Pretoria for arms and ammunition. The date of the reply is May 9, that is to say, four days after the despatch of Lord Milner's message to Mr. Chamberlain, and from its contents it will

[1] The italics are mine.

be seen that the letter to which it was an answer was written even earlier. Following is the translation :

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES, PRETORIA,
May 9, 1899.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I am sorry that I could not earlier fulfil my promise as to the ammunition. The reason for it is that His Honour the Commandant-General[1] was away, and I could consequently not get the desired information earlier.

The General says that he has 15 to 20 (twenty) million Mauser and 10 to 12 million Martini Henry cartridges, and if needed will be able to supply you with any of either sort.

On that score your Excellency can accordingly be at rest.

The situation looks very dark indeed, although nothing is as yet officially known to us. I trust that some change may still come in it through your proposed plan. The copies re dynamite will be sent to you at the earliest opportunity.

With best greeting,
Your humble servant and friend,
P. GROBLER.

This letter is only a flash, but it throws searching light upon the relations between Presidents Steyn and Kruger obviously unknown to Sir Henry de Villiers. There are, moreover, in existence two letters from Dr. Te Water, who was a member of Mr. Schreiner's Cabinet, of rather earlier date than those by the Chief Justice, which show that the wire-pullers of the Afrikander Bond understood President Steyn better than did Sir Henry de Villiers. The first of these letters, addressed to President Steyn, is dated May 8, 1899 :

Private and Confidential.)

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
CAPE TOWN,
May 8, 1899.

AMICE,

I have just telegraphed to you.

When you receive this I hope heartily that the proposition made to you by Schreiner in his letter to you may have been accepted, or that something has been done which will achieve the same purpose. Matters appear to all our friends to be very serious. I am one of those who think that much of the noise is bounce, and if anyone but Chamberlain was at the helm, I would perhaps still believe that they wished to try, by means of threats, to work matters in the Transvaal in the interest of the Uit-

[1] General Joubert.

landers. But with him I fear it is otherwise.[1] Be that as it may, I consider that nothing but good can come from the proposed Conference between the interested parties. In your position you as go-between can do endless good towards arriving at an understanding at such Conference. I know well that there is a party who will do everything possible to prevent this. Even Sivewright, I fear, with his premature propositions, wishes to close this door to us, knowing well that any proposal coming from him would be by Afrikanders considered as good as rejected by the Afrikanders. But all this makes it the more necessary to keep cool and to do what is right, irrespective of everything else.[2]

Circumstances appear to me now to be such that our friends in Pretoria must be yielding; with their friends at the head of the Government here, they have a better chance that reasonable propositions made by them will be accepted, than they would have had if we had been unsuccessful at the late elections and our enemies were advisers.

Schreiner, who knows more than any one of us, feels strongly that things are extremely critical.

Telegrams from people in London, whom he thoroughly trusts, such as J. H.'s[3] best friends, received by him on Saturday and this morning, strengthem him in his opinion. We must now play to win time. Governments are not perpetual, and I pray that the present team, so unjustly disposed towards us, may receive their reward before long. Their successors, I am certain, will follow a less hateful policy towards us. When we hear that you have succeeded in Pretoria, then we must bring influence to bear here. Nothing will give me greater pleasure than if you completely succeed in regulating matters on such a basis that peace will now be preserved and that the constant friction will be terminated.

Now, Amice, time forbids me writing more. But only one suggestion, Have you no private telegraphic code of which you can send me a copy? The absence thereof was badly felt on Saturday, when Schreiner was compelled to write instead of telegraphing, and there is so little time to lose.

Best greetings,

t. t.

[T. TE WATER.]

The letter in which the President of the Orange Free State replied to one of Her Majesty's Ministers at Cape Town is, unfortunately, not amongst those in our possession. But it is obvious from the contents of the next screed from Dr. Te Water that the President, who was so anxious to pose as the judicious bottle-holder, was already deeply committed to one of the principals. The letter is dated May 17, 1899, and is written, as usual, from the Colonial Secretary's Office, Cape Town. It runs as follows:

AMICE:

Yours received. I wish I could agree with you that all the noise about war is bluff. I fear that there is something earnest in it, how reck-

[1] In other words, Dr. Te Water pays Mr. Chamberlain the compliment of believing that he is the only Colonial Secretary who has meant what he said.

[2] The correlation of this pious sentiment with what follows is instructive.

[3] Jan Hofmeyr.

less soever, and however terrible the consequences by which it may be accompanied.

Also I doubt if so much good will come from the meeting as some of our best friends expect; but there is a chance, and in any case no harm can come out of it if you stand between.

Two hard stones will grind with difficulty. I expect much from you personally.

But now I should like a few words of explanation, as to what you mean by saying that 'The Cape Ministry will be able to do much more good.' In what respect do you think that we can be of more use than before? I would very much like to know your views, and if we are not already working in that direction I will try, as far as possible, to do what I can to give effect to your wishes, which may be for the welfare of all. Please let me hear immediately and fully about this.

In other respects, I agree entirely with your remarks.

There is one thing that you must not forget, that things here go awkwardly. Even our information is at times not what it ought to be, and for that, perhaps, my Bloemfontein friends are also a little to blame.

What I repeat is, that the opportunity has now arisen to grant what can be reasonably asked. If people become unreasonable, then we have the sympathy of the world on our side; but if reasonable things are refused, then our position becomes very difficult. Well, there is now a brilliant opportunity for you to render to South Africa such services as will never fade from memory.

I saw Wessels for half an hour yesterday; he leaves this afternoon. 'If there is a possibility of war I shall return,' so he told me. His communications were very interesting and important.

I am very curious to hear what is at the back of these latest endeavours to disturb the peace at Johannesburg. I see by the cables that Rhodes says he knows nothing about it. But then he knew nothing about the Jameson Raid.

I have just telegraphed to you, after having consulted Hofmeyr and Schreiner. with reference to the necessity of both parties being informed of the conditions on which the other agrees to attend the Conference. It must be clearly understood, so that no wrong deductions can be made.

Best greetings and all success,

t. t.

[T. TE WATER.]

A letter from Dr. Te Water to President Steyn of ten days' later date should also be read in connection with the above, and with the circumstances in which the Bloemfontein Conference was held.

(*Private and Confidential.*)

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
CAPE TOWN,
May 27, 1899.

DEAR STEYN,

Yours received on my return this morning from Aberdeen. Telegram also reached me. I keep all your communications strictly private; naturally you do not exclude my colleagues and our friend Hofmeyr. I have often read extracts to them; but do not be afraid, I shall not give you away.

To-day, by post, I send you personally our private telegraphic code for use. I borrowed one from Sauer; we have only three, and I must, therefore, ask you to let us have it back in the course of a couple of weeks. Please keep it under lock, and use it yourself *only*. It is quite possible that you will have to communicate with us, and the telegraphic service is not entirely to be trusted. I am afraid that things leak out there in one way or another.

I shall not answer your letter now. I heartily hope that your intermediation at such a critical moment will bear glorious fruit. Do your best. It is honestly now the time to yield a little, *however one may later again tighten the rope.*[1] Keep us duly informed of the course of affairs. I sincerely regret that neither Schreiner nor Hofmeyr can go, but although I have not been able to speak to Schreiner fully about this since my return, I am afraid it is now out of the question.

Everything will come right notwithstanding.

All success to your labours, amice.

Best wishes from us all to you, and also to your guests from over the Vaal.

t. t.
[T. TE WATER.]

P.S.—I have just seen the A.D.C., Belgrave.[2] He would very much like to have a chance to shoot a couple of springbucks, with our friend Papenfus. But be careful how they shoot.

T. TE W.

This imperfect correspondence is most important as throwing light upon the circumstances in which the Bloemfontein Conference met. Although the replies of President Steyn are wanting, it is sufficiently clear that the Africander party in the two Republics and in Cape Colony was acting in concert. Of this fact I feel assured, that Mr. Schreiner was ignorant. It will be observed that Dr. Te Water, who was Mr. Hofmeyr's Chief of the Staff at the headquarters of the Afrikander Bond, supplied some at least of his colleagues in the Ministry with only such extracts as he thought good for them. 'I have often read extracts to them; but do not be afraid, I shall not give you away.' Mr. Schreiner was not a member of the Afrikander Bond, and it is obvious that he was never admitted to their innermost secrets. Otherwise neither the participation of the Orange Free State in the war nor the rebellion of so large a number of the Dutch colonists would have caused him the surprise it obviously did. The situation was perhaps one of the most remarkable that can be found in the annals of the British Empire. In a self-

[1] The italics are mine.
[2] The present Duke of Westminster, A.D.C. to Lord Milner.

governing colony was a Prime Minister himself personally loyal and co-operating with the Governor in that spirit of mutual confidence which usually characterizes the relations between Ministers and the representative of the Crown. In touch with him, sharing all his confidence, was one Minister certainly, and probably two, the second being Mr. Sauer, who were conspiring with the leader of two semi-independent States to defeat and thwart his policy. These conspirators were meeting Lord Milner every day in private and confidential council, where they learnt from a man of singularly frank and open disposition exactly the views which he took of the situation, and of the steps by which he sought to avert a great calamity. All that was gleaned in the council-chamber was telegraphed or communicated directly to Mr. Steyn, who, as we now learn, was collaborating with President Kruger in all his intrigues. There can be no reasonable doubt upon this subject, since Dr. Te Water could hardly have borrowed Mr. Sauer's private code for the purpose of gossiping with President Steyn. It is certain, therefore, that the President of the Orange Free State was in full possession of Lord Milner's views as expressed in the confidential freedom of Cabinet councils at the time when he proposed to act as mediator at Bloemfontein. It is not less certainly demonstrated that the Afrikander party in Cape Colony, as well as in the Orange Free State, was, in the words of Dr. Te Water, 'playing to win time,' or, as he subsequently put it, 'it is honestly now the time to yield a little, however one may later again tighten the rope.'

It is essential to remember that some of these documents from which I have been quoting were written before the proposals for a Conference at Bloemfontein. They prove how intimate were the relations between the representatives of what were generally understood to be three distinct interests in South Africa, viz., the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, and the Afrikander Bond in Cape Colony. In the game in which Lord Milner was engaged, it was supposed even by one so thoroughly behind the scenes as Mr. Schreiner that the three parties were striving independently for objects which were very far indeed from

being identical. To those who knew South Africa best, to men like Mr. Rhodes, who had been in active alliance with the Afrikander Bond, it appeared incredible that the Orange Free State and the Dutch colonists of the Cape would allow their sympathies to carry them so far as to stake their all upon the success of a Transvaal defiance of Great Britain. The position of the Orange Free State was so strong, and was so dependent—if I may so put it—upon the maintenance of a reasoned rivalry between the Cape and the South African Republic, that it seemed beyond the limits of human perversity that she should take part in a quarrel which was none of hers—the more so as the triumph of either of the combatants must result in her absorption. If the efforts of the Transvaal succeeded in driving Great Britain out of South Africa, the capital of the United States of South Africa would certainly not have been Bloemfontein. Either Pretoria or Cape Town would have been selected for this honour. It is true, of course, that Mr. Steyn might have secured the reversion of the presidentship of this new Republic upon the death of Mr. Kruger, but at that time, at any rate, no one believed that Mr. Steyn was ready to forfeit the incalculable advantages which circumstances gave to the Orange Free State in order to gratify his personal ambition. And in the colony the personal equation was also under-estimated. It needs only a glance at the map to see that the extirpation of British influence from South Africa would have been followed by the destruction of the prosperity of Cape Colony. Delogoa Bay in the first instance, Walfisch Bay, or Great Fish Bay subsequently, would have become the ports of entry for a Republic dominated from Pretoria. There were international difficulties in the way of securing Delagoa Bay as a British harbour which would have been non-existent in the event of Mr. Kruger's appearance upon the scene as a bidder with the wealth of the Rand behind him. Even as things were the Cape Dutch farmers were not too prosperous. The removal of the port of entry from Cape Town to Delagoa Bay or to Walfisch Bay would have completed their ruin.

The wire-pullers of the Afrikander Bond, however, had other inducements than these to influence them. The dissatisfaction which had rapidly been growing in the Transvaal

itself, at the monopolization by Hollanders of the most important and most lucrative posts in the Republic, had frightened Mr. Kruger, and he was already drawing the nucleus of a new administration from promising young Afrikanders in Cape Colony. Mr. Smuts, the Attorney-General, who, it is said, owed his education at Cambridge to the munificence of Mr. Rhodes, was one of the most conspicuous of these recruits.[1] There can be little doubt that Mr. Smuts was one of the foremost, if not the foremost, of the abettors of Mr. Kruger in his violently anti-English policy. It is an unquestioned fact that he was also on terms of the closest intimacy with Mr. Hofmeyr and the wire-pullers of the Afrikander Bond. And it was from the ranks of that confederacy that the future rulers of a United South Africa were to be selected. So it came to pass that the interests of the chief actors in the drama which was now nearing its denouement were altogether different from those of the rank and file, whose representatives they were supposed to be. No one, I imagine, will contend that the welfare and independence of the Boer farmers spread over the veld in the Transvaal were furthered, or even considered, by the policy of the oligarchy which ruled at Pretoria. It would be equally extravagant to pretend that the burghers of the Orange Free State, living on terms of friendship and respect with the British farmers in their midst, could have anything to gain by their Government picking an unprovoked quarrel with Great Britain. And, for the economical reasons I have stated above, the interests of the farmers in Cape Colony, constituting the rank and file of the Afrikander Bond, were as antagonistic as possible to those of the wire-pullers. A statesman, therefore, called upon to deal with a problem in which these three different parties were concerned must naturally suppose that the spokesman of each section would represent the interests of those for whom he was presumably acting. How long it was before Lord Milner discovered that the actual facts bore no relation to this

[1] Not a very friendly description of Mr. J. S. Smuts will be found in 'Why Kruger made War,' p. 79 *et seq.*, by Mr. John A. Buttery, of whose work I have already said that, though unconventional in form, it bears the stamp of real knowledge, such as the chief sub-editor of the *Standard and Diggers' News* might be expected to acquire.

reasonable presumption, I am not prepared to say, but it is quite certain that he made the discovery long before the truth disclosed itself to his Prime Minister, Mr. Schreiner, who had spent practically all his life amongst Afrikanders. Up to the time of the declaration of war by the Republics, Mr. Schreiner really believed that President Steyn would take no part in a policy of aggression against Great Britain, and he was equally convinced that the Dutch farmers in the Cape would understand their own interests too well to join in a mad attempt to expel British authority from South Africa. By Lord Milner himself these truths, which came to light at a much later date, could only be very vaguely discernible. If it was impossible for Lord Milner to ascertain exactly what was being thought and done in the inner councils at Pretoria, Bloemfontein, and the offices of the Afrikander Bond, the confederates knew every move in the game as conducted by Lord Milner, because the members of his Cabinet were using the Government code to communicate with their fellows at Bloemfontein and Pretoria all that they learnt in their confidential relations with the High Commissioner. We know that before the proposal for a Conference at Bloemfontein the 'honest broker,' Mr. Steyn, was pestering the Transvaal Government for arms and ammunition in view of the war which he knew had been determined upon. Dr. Te Water, who was in the Cabinet, and who acted as Mr. Hofmeyr's right-hand man, was urging a little relaxation now and a tiny concession then, not with a view to securing lasting peace in South Africa, but to obtain a postponement of the inevitable struggle till a Radical Government should be installed in Downing Street. It would be difficult to find a parallel in history for the position of embarrassment and delicacy in which Lord Milner found himself. However deep and well-founded might be his suspicions of the honesty of those with whom he was conducting negotiations, he was obliged to act as if he believed in their good faith, or otherwise he must have precipitated the crisis he was so anxious to avert.

Such was the position of affairs at Cape Town when Mr. Chamberlain's reply to the petition of the Uitlanders was

received. In this despatch, as in that of Lord Milner's of May 5, which is given in full above, Mr. Chamberlain makes it clear that it is not the grievances of the capitalists, but those of the rank and file of the Uitlanders, which command the sympathy of Her Majesty's Government. He touched upon the wrongs of the capitalists, as he was bound to do, inasmuch as the measures of which they complained were flagrant violations of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the London Conventions, which, as I have pointed out above, profess to secure absolute equality of taxation for burgher and non-burgher alike. Mr. Chamberlain goes on, however, to say:

Her Majesty's Government,[1] however, attach much less importance to financial grievances than to those which affect the personal rights of the Uitlander community, and which place them in a condition of political, educational, and social inferiority to the Boer inhabitants of the Transvaal, and even endanger the security of their lives and property.

It is in this respect that the spirit, if not the letter, of the Convention has been most seriously infringed.

For instance, the Government spends £250,000 a year, mostly taken out of the pockets of the Uitlanders, on popular education, but under conditions which make it almost impossible for the children of Uitlanders to benefit by it. The State system, indeed, appears to be more directed to forcing upon the Uitlander population the habitual use of the Dutch language than to imparting to them the rudiments of general knowledge.

The law of 1896 dealing with education on the gold-fields has, indeed, been claimed as a reform, but it scarcely even pretends to be so, for it leaves the education of non-Dutch-speaking children in the hands of the Superintendent of Education, who is not controlled by any local representative authority, and it declares that the spirit and tendency of former legislation is to be strictly adhered to. What that spirit is may be gathered from the provisions in Law No. 8 of 1892, that all teaching must be in Dutch, and that all school books must be written in Dutch, and from the strict limitation imposed by the law on the number of hours in the week in which any living foreign language may be taught. In no standard may they exceed four out of twenty-five, while in the lowest standards none are allowed.[2]

As a matter of fact, Her Majesty's Government understand that in State-aided schools on the gold-fields an increasingly larger proportion of Dutch is required in the higher standards until, in the fourth standard, Dutch is the sole medium of education, with the result that there are only half a dozen schools on the gold-fields in receipt of State aid. Yet the Superintendent of Education complained in his Departmental Report for 1896 of the 'uneducational and unnational cry for more English.'

This grievance, and many others of which the Uitlanders complain,

[1] Blue-book, 9345, p. 227 *et seq.*

[2] It will be observed that the date of this law is three years antecedent to the Raid.

would have been very much lessened if the expectations raised by the President's promises to grant a municipality to Johannesburg had been fulfilled, and if the Uitlanders of that town had at least been permitted to enjoy the full privileges of local government in reference to purely municipal affairs; but the law creating the municipality wholly fails to give to the majority of the inhabitants any effective control over their own local affairs. Although the burgher population must form a very small minority of the whole (according to the petitioners only about one twenty-fourth), half the members of the Council must under this law be fully enfranchised burghers. The Burgomaster is appointed and paid by the Government. He is bound to submit every regulation of the Town Council to the Executive Council within four days of its passsing, which latter body may disallow the regulation. All minutes must be kept in the Dutch language only. The financial powers of the Council are restricted, and it is clear that the law is hardly any concession in the way of self-government to Johannesburg. . . .

It would seem, indeed, that the Uitlander is not only deprived, by provisions introduced into the Constitution since the Convention of 1884, of any effective political representation, but that he has also been placed by recent legislation under new liabilities, unknown when the Convention was signed, if he appeals to public opinion or attempts to bring his complaints to the notice of the Government.

By the Press Law No. 26 of 1896 and the amending Law No. 14 of 1898, which was reprobated by Transvaal newspapers of all shades of opinion, that freedom of the expression of opinion which the original Constitution of the Republic guaranteed, subject only to the responsibility of the printer and publisher for all documents containing defamation, insult, or attacks on any one's character (Grondwet, 1858, Article 19), is seriously threatened. Under these laws the President is given the power, on the advice and with the consent of the Executive, of prohibiting entirely or for a time the circulation of printed matter which, in his opinion, is contrary to good morals or a danger to peace and order in the Republic. This power has been exercised more than once.

Under the Aliens Expulsion Law (No. 25 of 1896) an alien who is alleged to have excited to disobedience of the law, or otherwise to have acted in a manner dangerous to public peace and order, may be arbitrarily expelled from the country by an order of the President, while burghers, who cannot be banished, may have a special place of residence assigned to them. From the point of view of the Uitlander, the law draws an invidious distinction in favour of the burgher, who alone is given an appeal to the courts, and it is thus clearly inconsistent with the spirit of the London Convention, while, as was pointed out in the correspondence on the subject printed in the Blue-book C. 8,423, its enforcement might lead to a breach of the letter of that instrument. Her Majesty's Government regret that the resolution of the Volksraad of July, 1897, in favour of amending the law so as to give everyone an appeal to the courts (see p. 16 of Blue-book C. 8,721), has merely resulted in the passing of Law No. 5 of 1898, which repeals the law of 1896, and re-enacts it without making any substantial alteration.

Up to 1897 the Uitlander had full confidence that, at all events in cases where he was permitted to appeal to the High Court of the Republic, he would obtain justice; but that confidence has been rudely shaken by Law No. 1 of that year, under which the President dismissed a Chief Justice universally respected. This law recites that since the foundation of the Republic the resolutions of the Volksraad have been

recognised as law, and lays down that the courts have no power to refuse to apply any resolution because it is in their opinion invalid, and instructs the President to dismiss any Judge who in his opinion returns an unsatisfactory answer to questions on the subject put to him by the President. It therefore follows that the fifteen gentlemen who compose a majority of the First Volksraad can at any moment amend the law of the land in the most important matters by a mere resolution, or even interfere in a case pending in the courts, as was, in fact, done in the Doms case, when the Volksraad, by its resolutions of May 4, 1887, barred a claim brought in the courts against the State.

The law has practically had the effect of placing the highest court of justice in the country at the mercy of the Executive, and it is calculated to lessen the influence and authority of the court, and even to throw doubts on the impartial administration of justice in the Republic.

It results from this review of the facts and conditions on which the petition is founded, as well as from the information derived from your despatches and from other official sources, that British subjects and the Uitlanders generally in the South African Republic have substantial grounds for their complaints of the treatment to which they are subjected.

It is fair to assume that these complaints are directed not so much against individual cases of hardship and injustice, which may occur in even the best-governed States, as against the system under which the sufferers are debarred from all voice in the legislation under which such cases are possible, and all control of the Administration through the inefficiency of which they occur. They may be summarized in the statement that under present conditions, all of which have arisen since the Convention of 1884 was signed, the Uitlanders are now denied that equality of treatment which that instrument was designed to secure for them.

The conditions subsisting in the South African Republic are altogether inconsistent with such equality, and are in striking contrast to those subsisting in all British colonies possessing representative institutions, where white men of every race enjoy equal freedom and equal justice, and newcomers are, after a reasonable period of residence, admitted to full political rights.

In the Orange Free State, where similar privileges are conceded to all aliens resident in the Republic, the Dutch burgher and the foreign immigrant who enjoys the hospitality of the State live in harmony and mutual confidence, and the independence of the Republic is secured as well by the contentment and loyalty of all its citizens as by the good relations which prevail between its Government and those of other parts of South Africa.

Unfortunately, the policy of the South African Republic has been conducted on very different lines, and but for the anxiety of Her Majesty's Government to extend every consideration to a weaker State, which in recent years has had just reason to complain of the action of British subjects, and may therefore be naturally prone to suspicion and indisposed to take an impartial view of the situation, the state of affairs must have led to the most serious protest and remonstrance.

Recognising, however, the exceptional circumstances of the case, Her Majesty's Government have refrained, since their despatch of February 4, 1896, from any pressure on the Government of the South African Republic, except in cases in which there has been a distinct breach of the provisions of the Convention of 1884; and they have sincerely hoped

that the Government of the Republic would voluntarily meet the expectations raised by the President, and would take the necessary steps to secure that willing loyalty of all the inhabitants of the State which would be the best guarantee for its security and independence.

They are most unwilling to depart from their attitude of reserve and expectancy; but, having regard to the position of Great Britain as the paramount Power in South Africa, and the duty incumbent upon them to protect all British subjects residing in a foreign country, they cannot permanently ignore the exceptional and arbitrary treatment to which their fellow-countrymen and others are exposed, and the absolute indifference of the Government of the Republic to the friendly representations which have been made to them on the subject.

They still cherish the hope that the publicity given to the present representations of the Uitlander population, and the fact, of which the Government of the South African Republic must be aware, that they are losing the sympathy of those other States which, like Great Britain, are deeply interested in the prosperity of the Transvaal, may induce them to reconsider their policy, and, by redressing the most serious of the grievances now complained of, to remove a standing danger to the peace and prosperity, not only of the Republic itself, but also of South Africa generally.

Her Majesty's Government earnestly desire the prosperity of the South African Republic. They have been anxious to avoid any intervention in its internal concerns, and they may point out in this connection that if they really entertained the design of destroying its independence, which has been attributed to them, no policy could be better calculated to defeat their object than that which, in all friendship and sincerity, they now urge upon the Government of the South African Republic, and which would remove any pretext for interference by relieving British subjects of all just cause of complaint. With the earnest hope of arriving at a satisfactory settlement, and as a proof of their desire to maintain cordial relations with the South African Republic, Her Majesty's Government now suggest for the consideration of President Kruger that a meeting should be arranged between His Honour and yourself for the purpose of discussing the situation in a conciliatory spirit, and in the hope that you may arrive, in concert with the President, at such an arrangement as Her Majesty's Government could accept and recommend to the Uitlander population as a reasonable concession to their just demands, and the settlement of the difficulties which have threatened the good relations which Her Majesty's Government desire should constantly exist between themselves and the Government of the South African Republic.

If the President should be disposed favourably to entertain this suggestion, you are authorized to proceed to Pretoria to confer with him on all the questions raised in this despatch.

Her Majesty's Government desire that the British Agent at Pretoria should communicate a copy of the petition and of this despatch to the Government of the South African Republic, and also communicate a copy of this despatch to the petitioners.

On May 9 Mr. Hofmeyr, who had kept in the background for some time, approached Lord Milner with a proposal for a Conference at Bloemfontein, which he described, in language somewhat inept in view of what we now know, as 'neutral ground.' On the following day Mr. Schreiner

read to Lord Milner a copy of the telegram which he had received from President Steyn, which ran as follows :[1]

In view of the unsettled state of feeling through South Africa which is caused by the many rumours which receive currency through the newspapers, I have come to the conclusion, after careful consideration, that it might be advisable and lead to good results if a meeting between the High Commissioner and the President of the South African Republic could be arranged here at an early date, at which, as may be desired by them, I could take part or not. The meeting would be with a view to arriving at some satisfactory understanding by discussing the present position in a friendly spirit. If the High Commissioner would fall in with the idea, I have reason for thinking that the President of South African Republic would be inclined to accept an invitation from me to such a meeting. Could you ascertain and inform me whether, if I issued such an invitation, the High Commissioner would accept?

Lord Milner, in forwarding this telegram to Mr. Chamberlain, adds :

Schreiner, in his own name and that of his colleagues, urged me most strongly to accept the invitation. This was the result, he said, of the influence which he had been using with the Transvaal Government ever since I had warned him of the gravity of the situation, and it was a very great step in advance on the part of President Kruger, as he (Schreiner) regarded it. I could hardly take that view, I said, as the invitation did not emanate from President Kruger himself, and what was to be the basis or subject of the discussion was not indicated in any way. The attempt to lay down the subject of the discussion would result, he replied, in a long paper controversy, and he looked for the best results from the substitution for paper controversy of personal discussion.

In light of the communications which had been passing between President Steyn and the Transvaal Executive on the one hand, and those between Dr. Te Water and President Steyn on the other, this proposal looked very like a deliberate trap, of the nature of which it is quite clear Mr. Schreiner himself had no idea. Of President Steyn's bad faith in the matter there can be no question. He was aware of the terms of the secret defensive and offensive alliance between his own State and the South African Republic, and, as we have seen, he was at the very time he sought to pose as a mediator pestering the Pretoria Government for arms and ammunition. Mr. Schreiner no doubt imagined that it was his influence which had moved the President to take this course, but he was as ignorant as the High Commissioner himself of the nature of the correspondence which had been passing between

[1] Blue-book, C. 9345, p. 239.

the representatives of the Afrikander Bond and President Kruger's allies.

Mr. Chamberlain, on the receipt of Lord Milner's telegram, replied at once on May 12:

You may state, after acknowledging President Steyn's action in appreciative terms, that you are informed that a despatch is already on its way, in which, after carefully examining the general situation and the allegations in the petition, Her Majesty's Government have suggested for the consideration of President Kruger, with the earnest hope of arriving at a satisfactory settlement, and as a proof of their desire to maintain cordial relations with the South African Republic, that a meeting should be arranged between His Honour and yourself for the purpose of discussing the situation in a conciliatory spirit, and in the hope that, in concert with the President, you may arrive at such an arrangement as Her Majesty's Government could accept and recommend to the Uitlander population as a reasonable concession to their just demands and a settlement of the difficulties which have threatened the good relations which Her Majesty's Government desire should constantly exist between themselves and the Government of the South African Republic.

It is here clearly laid down that the sole object of such a Conference as was proposed was to discuss the grievances complained of by the Uitlanders in their petition, and to ascertain if such reasonable concessions could be obtained from Mr. Kruger as would justify Her Majesty's Government in recommending them to the subjects of the Queen in the Transvaal. President Kruger's reply is important in view of the attitude which he adopted at the Conference. It was transmitted through President Steyn on May 16, and expresses 'regret that the High Commissioner goes further than my intention in my last telegram to you; but I remain disposed to come to Bloemfontein, and will gladly discuss every proposal in a friendly way that can conduce to a good understanding between South African Republic and England, and to the maintenance of peace in South Africa, provided that the independence of this Republic is not impugned.'

There is no indication here of that desire to conclude a Kaffir bargain, which rendered nugatory the Conference at Bloemfontein. President Steyn, in forwarding this telegram to the High Commissioner, adds:

As I am satisfied that it is the earnest desire of us all to promote peace, harmony, and understanding in all matters of common interest in South Africa, and to try and insure it by all means in our power and that a meeting such as is proposed may contribute much to remove existing difficulties

and misunderstanding, I hope and trust that your Excellency will be able to accept my well-intentioned invitation which I now send, and will further honour us by consenting to be the guest of this State. May I propose, if you have no other wishes, that Tuesday, the 30th, may be fixed as the date of the meeting? I will also propose the date I have named to the President of the South African Republic.

The Conference was finally arranged to meet on May 31, and on the 22nd Lord Milner telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain:

I feel that, without asking for elaborate instructions, I need some indication of line you wish me to take at Conference. It is my own inclination to put in foreground the question of Uitlanders' grievances, treating it as broadly as possible, and insisting that it is necessary, in order to relieve situation, that Uitlanders should obtain some substantial degree of representation by legislation to be passed this session. Following would be general line: Franchise after six years retrospective, and at least seven members for the Rand, present number of Volksraad, South African Republic, being twenty-eight; this would make one-fifth of it Uitlander members. If President South African Republic will not agree to anything like this, I should try municipal government for the whole Rand as an alternative, with wide powers, including control of police. If he rejects this, too, I do not see much use in discussing various outstanding questions between two Governments in detail, such as dynamite, violations of Zululand boundary, *Critic* case, war-tax, Cape Boys and Indians, though it will be desirable to allude to them in course of discussion and point out gravity of having so many subjects of dispute unsettled. If President South African Republic inclined, on the other hand, to listen even to the extent of undertaking to submit to Volksraad reasonable concessions for Uitlanders, I should try then to arrive at basis for settlements of other questions.

Mr. Chamberlain endorsed this proposition in the following telegram of May 24:

It is not my intention to give you any formal instructions for Conference; I wish to leave you as free as possible a hand. I think personally that you should lay all the stress on the question of franchise in first instance. Other reforms are less pressing, and will come in time, if this can be arranged satisfactorily and form of oath modified. Redistribution is reasonable and important, but you might accept a moderate concession. If fair terms on franchise are refused by President, it appears hardly worth while to bring forward other matters, such as aliens, coloured people, education, dynamite, etc., at the Conference, and the whole situation must be reconsidered. You should not, however, lose sight of possible alternative in shape of full municipal rights for populous mining districts and Johannesburg. This I still think a feasible solution if President fears that independence will be endangered by concession of general franchise.

This brief telegraphic correspondence disposes of practically the whole fabric of misrepresentation which has been

carefully reared by the pro-Boers in England with regard to the policy adopted by Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner. Once more it is made perfectly clear that the object of all the negotiations with the South African Republic was not the redress of grievances which specially affected the interests of the capitalist, but the removal of the working-classes of British origin from the position of helotism to which they were reduced. It was not that the complaints of the capitalists were ignored, but it was felt by the Imperial Government that the claims of the rank and file of the Uitlanders had precedence over all others. This view was strengthened by the anticipation that, if the Uitlanders had even a very small repersentation in the Volksraad, they would be able to modify some of the economic abuses from which the mining industry unquestionably suffered. The sincerity of this attitude on the part of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner is proved to demonstration by their choice of the alternatives to be submitted to Mr. Kruger. They have been charged with wishing to insert the thin end of a wedge which, when ultimately driven home, would have rent in twain the independence of the South African Republic. It is argued that the concession of a fifth of the representation in the Volksraad would have been followed up by a demand for something like proportional representation, and that thus sooner or later the voice of the old burghers would be drowned in the Babel of the new-comers. It is, of course, quite impossible to prove that something would not have happened which never had the opportunity of happening. But let us look at the situation as affected by the alternative policy. If Mr. Kruger was, or affected to be, alarmed by the prospect that his old burghers would be swamped by the Uitlanders, Mr. Chamberlain had instructed Lord Milner to accept any reasonable proposition for giving self-govennment to Johannesburg. By no stretch of imagination could such a concession be regarded as interfering with the independence of the South African Republic. The whole administrative and Parliamentary power would still be confined to the burgher class. They would be able to pass what laws they pleased so long as they were not inconsistent with the Conventions ;

they would have the control of all concessions; they would regulate the incidence of taxation; they would impose whatever tariffs they thought fit on imported goods; their laws would always be paramount to those of the municipality of Johannesburg, as statutes passed by the Imperial Government are paramount to the by-laws of our great municipalities. The status of the Republic would be no more modified by the concessions to Johannesburg than the status of Great Britain as a whole was affected by the Local Government Act. All that the purveyors of wealth to the South African Republic could have achieved would have been the control of their own police, of the education of their children, and of the control of the liquor traffic. This was the alternative which in the last resort Lord Milner, acting under instructions, was prepared to accept.

Leaving aside for the moment the side-issues which the President incessantly introduced into a Conference which was strictly limited in its scope, let us examine the propositions first submitted by Lord Milner. They will be found in the despatch of June 5, in which the High Commissioner recapitulates the main features of the Conference.

After a general discussion lasting some time, ranging over a variety of topics, His Excellency on the second day of the Conference, at the invitation of the President, formulated his suggestion for enfranchisement as follows:[1]

Begins: He had to bear in mind, on the one hand, prejudices of old burghers and necessity of convincing them that they would not be swamped by new-comers, and, on the other hand, uselessness of proposing anything which would be rejected by Uitlanders as totally insufficient, and would not bring them on the side of the State, throwing in their lot with, and working in future with, the old burghers as one people. Bearing both these points in mind, he proposed that the full franchise should be given to every foreigner who (*a*) had been resident for five years in the Republic; (*b*) declared his intention to reside permanently; (*c*) took an oath to obey the laws, undertake all obligations of citizenship, and defend independence of country; franchise to be confined to persons of good character possessing a certain amount of property or income; finally, some increase of seats in district where the Uitlanders principally reside. The number of these was a matter for discussion, but it was essential that they should not be so few as to leave the representatives of the new constituencies in a contemptible minority.—*Ends.*

The whole case for the British Government in the controversy as to the rights and the wrongs of this war might

[1] Blue-book, C. 9415, p. 2.

be based upon the submission and rejection of this proposal. The charge made against the Colonial Office and Lord Milner is that they aimed at the incorporation of the Transvaal within the British Empire by means direct or indirect. The answer to this allegation is contained in the brief paragraph which I have quoted above. It will not be denied that if President Kruger had accepted these proposals off-hand, and had given immediate effect to them, the Conference would have closed in peace and harmony, and the acute stage of the crisis in South Africa would have passed away for ever. Let us see, then, what would have been the position of the Republic had President Kruger complied with these moderate demands. Only such Uitlanders would have been added to the list of burghers as had resided five years in the Transvaal. That provision would have excluded the floating population here to-day and gone to-morrow, of which Mr. Kruger professed himself, perhaps not unreasonably, to be suspicious. The first safeguard would in itself have excluded this class, but it was not the only safeguard. Lord Milner proposed that those wishing to acquire the standing of burghers should, in addition to proof of their five years' residence, sign a declaration that they intended to become permanent citizens. No man was likely to make such a declaration after five years' residence in the Transvaal unless he had determined to carry it out. For it is impossible to conceive the state of mind of a foreigner who would give up his own nationality and perjure himself simply to acquire the right of voting at one particular election. But Lord Milner did not stop there in his anxiety to meet reasonable, and even unreasonable, objections on the part of the reactionary and suspicious Boer. Before the five-years resident could acquire the franchise he was to take an oath to obey the laws and to assume the obligations of citizenship, including that of responding to the summons to join a commando in the event of war, against whomsoever it might be. That there should be no doubt and no room for mental reservations as to his liberty to fight against the land of his birth, the oath explicitly included an undertaking 'to defend the independence of the country.' The independence of the Transvaal could in no conceivable circumstances be menaced by any other

Power than Great Britain. It was surrounded, except on the Portuguese side, by British territory. The oceans which guarded every approach to the Transvaal were commanded by a British fleet. There was no possibility of doubt in any man's mind that Great Britain would put forth the whole strength of her Empire to prevent any foreign interference with South Africa. No stronger guarantee could have been imagined of the sincerity of Great Britain's desire to respect the virtual independence of the Transvaal than is contained in this provision that every Briton who desired to naturalize himself as a burgher of the Republic should explicitly pledge himself to defend his new country against any attacks that might be made upon it by the old country. It must be repeated that Mr. Kruger had only to say 'Done' to this offer to have secured hostages for ever against encroachments on the part of the Imperial Government. It was alleged on behalf of the South African Republic that they dreaded the extension of the franchise to a class of disreputable and irresponsible persons such as are to be found in all mining communities. It might have been retorted that the worst specimen of Uitlander could hardly have rivalled a large number of the burghers in ignorance and corruptibility; but Lord Milner provided even for this objection. It was part of the scheme submitted by him that 'the franchise should be confined to persons of good character possessing a certain amount of property or income.' It cannot be denied that this offer showed a perhaps dangerous confidence in the good faith of the Boer Executive, for questions of 'character' can be dealt with on a very generous or a very narrow basis. Last of all came the guarantee against swamping the representatives of the old burghers in the Volksraad. Although at that date the number of adult male Uitlanders far exceeded that of adult male burghers in the South African Republic, all that was asked for was that there should be 'some increase of seats in districts where the Uitlanders principally reside,' and it was also demanded that these members should not be so few in number 'as to leave the representatives of the new constituencies in a contemptible minority.'

We know, and President Kruger knew, that Lord Milner's idea was that, in a chamber of thirty-five members, five only

should be returned by the overwhelming majority of the mining population. It may be said that, if President Kruger had closed with this offer, there was still a number of outstanding questions which would have to be settled between the Imperial Government and the Transvaal Executive. To this the answer is twofold: Most of the difficulties in question were of a nature that could be discussed and decided in a representative Volksraad. There were the various monopolies, the inadequate and corrupt police service, the deficiencies of the educational system, the control of the liquor traffic, the freedom of the press, the right of public meeting, and the like, which fell absolutely within the province of the Volksraad. Five representatives of the Uitlanders could not have imposed their will upon the thirty elected by the old burghers. But what they could have done, and unquestionably would have done, would have been to call attention to the jobbery and abuses for which the unrecognised Third Raad was mainly responsible. It is very likely that in course of time five representatives of superior knowledge and education would have attracted round them a party of the more enlightened and progressive Boers, and ultimately have been the leaders of a majority in the Volksraad. That such a prospect should be open to them is of the essence of constitutional government in its most elementary form; but that was the limit of their powers. The representatives of the Uitlanders were predestined to be a permanent minority unless by force of character and the strength of their cause they could convert a number of Boer representatives to their way of thinking. Again, it is said that if they failed to secure redress for the grievances of the Uitlanders, there would be another appeal for the intervention of the Imperial Government. Even so the Republic would have gained a very considerable respite from all possibility of interference. The Colonial Office, having suggested an experiment to the Boer Executive which the latter had frankly adopted, would have been debarred from meddling until the experiment had been submitted to a long trial and had been an approved failure. From the moral point of view, President Kruger, or his successors, by acceptance of these proposals would immeasurably have

strengthened their position as against external intervention. They would have been able to say: 'You complained of the maltreatment of the alien population of the Transvaal. You yourselves suggested the remedy. We applied it in good faith, and still you are not satisfied. Your only object, therefore, can be the destruction of the independence of the State.' I do not for a moment suggest that this hypothetical argument on the part of the Boers, in the event of the failure of the experiment suggested, would have been a sound one, but I am convinced that it would have been so plausible as to render it impossible for any British Government to demand further reform at the point of the bayonet. Why, then, did President Kruger refuse these terms? The general answer to that question is to be found in every preceding chapter of this book. The particular reply is furnished by a study of the details of the Bloemfontein Conference itself.

Although President Kruger had been carefully informed as to the objects of the Bloemfontein Conference, and the conditions on which Lord Milner took part in it, he, deliberately or unconsciously, misunderstood the situation. It must be remembered that the Conference was originally suggested by President Steyn and the leaders of the Afrikander Bond acting in concert. Their recommendation of such a meeting was based upon the expectations they professed to entertain that a personal interview between the High Commissioner and the President of the South African Republic would lead to a settlement of the troubles which were menacing the peace of the whole country. It was not pretended that any other question, save that of the treatment of the Uitlanders in the Transvaal, was the root of all the mischief. If that source of trouble could be effectually dammed up, the other questions between Her Majesty's Government and the Transvaal would be satisfactorily settled by the ordinary process of diplomatic negotiations. The sole object, therefore, of the meeting was to arrive, if possible, at some arrangement as to the future status of the Uitlanders. President Kruger, however, took a different view of the matter. He seems to have persuaded himself that the Conference at Bloemfontein would represent in miniature one of those great International Congresses which,

at the close of some European war, had defined the boundaries and adjusted the claims of the Great Powers. Such Congresses are, in the nature of things, gatherings of the representatives of free, independent, and sovereign States. Pretensions, often most extravagant, are put forward on the part of this Power or of that, in the hope of gaining some relatively unimportant concession. 'Give and take' is the rule which guides the deliberations of a European Areopagus. Neither that nor anything like it was the condition of affairs in South Africa. The High Commissioner represented the paramount Power which was before the world responsible for the peace and tranquillity of the whole of South Africa, between the Zambesi and Cape Agulhas. The paramount Power had, or conceived it had, serious causes of complaint against the semi-independent Republic of South Africa on the score of the treatment meted out by the latter to the subjects of the former. Such a complaint, if well founded, would have justified a serious representation on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to any sovereign or independent State.[1] But in South Africa the ground for representation, and even intervention, was infinitely stronger than it could be elsewhere. The race which was charged with oppressing and misgoverning British subjects was closely allied by ties of blood, sympathy and language with one-half of Her Majesty's subjects in a colony separated from the Transvaal only by artificial and arbitrary boundaries. On the British side of this line of demarcation the Dutch kinsmen of the Boers enjoyed every privilege which British subjects can claim in any part of the Empire. They had, as we know, at that moment a Government of their own selection. It was, therefore, impossible that the object-lesson supplied on one side of the Vaal, by

[1] 'The President, in coming here, has made a reservation as to the independence of the Republic. I cannot see that it is in any way impairing the independence of the Republic for Her Majesty's Government to support the cause of the Uitlanders as far as it is reasonable. A vast number of them are British subjects. If we had an equal number of British subjects and equally large interests in any part of the world, even in a country which was not under any conventional obligations to Her Majesty's Government, we should be bound to make representations to the Government in the interest of Her Majesty's subjects, and to point out that the intense discontent of these subjects stood in the way of the cordial relations which we desire to exist between us' (Lord Milner in opening the Conference, May 31, 1899; Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 15).

the degradation of Britons to the level of helots, could fail to have a baneful influence on the Dutch majority in Cape Colony. Taking, however, a totally unjustifiable view of the conditions of the Conference, President Kruger endeavoured to convert it into an opportunity for what, in South Africa, is called a Kaffir bargain. He put in four claims of his own, which he desired should be considered in conjunction with the main question before the Conference. These claims, or grievances, were: (1) The annexation of Zambaan's country; (2) his desire that Swaziland should be incorporated with the Republic; (3) the Jameson Raid indemnity; (4) arbitration.

As regards 1 (says Lord Milner), I referred him to your despatch on the subject then on its way to me, of which I gave him the substance;[1] 2 I absolutely rejected. As to 3, I took the line that, while I had no authority to speak about arbitration, and could not make it a part of any bargain, I certainly desired that, if the present proceedings ended in an all-round settlement, we might arrange for the adjustment of future differences by an 'automatic process,' by which I certainly meant their reference to some sort of tribunal. It is this remark of mine—a guarded statement of my personal opinion—of which the President afterwards made very unfair use, in saying that I had admitted that arbitration for all questions under the Convention was reasonable, and which appears, from the telegrams, to have been widely misunderstood in England.

The insistence upon this principle of arbitration had a deeper and more insidious significance than was attached to it by the average politician in Great Britain. Arbitration, in the broad sense in which President Kruger used the term, implied the equality of the two States consenting to adopt it. The insistence upon arbitration was a slim device on the part of President Kruger to secure for the Transvaal the status of an independent sovereign Republic, which he knew would be rejected were it categorically claimed. The importance of the point may be made clear by very simple illustrations. No British Ministry, to whatever length it might be disposed to go in granting Home Rule to Ireland, would dream of consenting to a clause in a Home Rule Bill which should refer any differences between Great Britain and Ireland to a court of arbitration. There might, of course, in such a case be a tribunal which should decide on lines peremptorily fixed the exact amount

[1] Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 4.

of Ireland's contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. But a right of appeal to arbitration on broad questions of policy between the two countries would have been tantamount to a recognition of the independence of Ireland. Loose as in many ways are the ties which unite Austria and Hungary, or Sweden and Norway, it would be inconceivable that any Austrian or Swedish Ministry would consent to a compulsory reference to arbitration on any question of policy which might arise between Austria and Hungary in the one case, and Sweden and Norway in the other. And this point Lord Milner made perfectly clear to President Kruger.[1]

In the first place, I would observe that I expressly guarded myself against the idea that arbitration was applicable to all differences. I was thinking, as I indicated, more especially of the question whether the laws and administration of the South African Republic were fair towards its foreign residents. It is, of course, absurd to suggest that the question whether the South African Republic does or does not treat British subjects resident in that country with justice, and the British Government with the consideration and respect due to any friendly, not to say suzerain, Power, is a question capable of being referred to arbitration. You cannot arbitrate on broad questions of policy, any more than on questions of national honour. Secondly, I stated quite clearly that Her Majesty's Government would not admit arbitration 'by a foreign Power *or any foreign interference*' between itself and the South African Republic.

The other counter-proposals of President Kruger had no connection at all with the object of the Conference. It was quite clear, for instance, that the question of the incorporation of Swaziland could be settled independently of any decision as to the status of the Uitlanders. It would have been monstrous that the President should have reserved to himself the right to treat British subjects badly on the express ground that he was not allowed to include within his country a native population which regarded Great Britain as its protector. It is unnecessary, as it would be wearisome, to follow in detail the repeated efforts of the President to confuse issues which had nothing to do with one another.

In the middle of the third day's Conference the President said :[2]

I have said already I wish to meet His Excellency as far as possible in his proposal about the franchise. I have also asked at the same time about the matter of Swaziland, whether that cannot be managed so that

[1] Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 5.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

it should become a portion of my land. I have also spoken about the indemnity and also about the arbitration, all being points of difficulty with me. His Excellency has not got any nearer in the matter of Swaziland or in the matter of the indemnity and on the point of arbitration. *But if he will not come nearer to me on these three points, I should get nothing by coming to an agreement on the point of the franchise. I think all the points should be taken simultaneously.*[1]

To which His Excellency replied :

However much I may desire to come to a settlement about this question of the position of the Uitlander population, I will not buy such a settlement. I am convinced that it is very much in the President's interest, more in his interest to get it settled. I consider the present position to be an absolute danger for the South African Republic.

President Kruger, undeterred, still pressed his three points, and Lord Milner met him frankly by saying :[2]

I entered on the earlier part of the discussion in a hopeful spirit, but I cannot say I am as hopeful at the end. I hope the President will meet me on the point which I consider of vital importance to him, and seriously grapple with this question first which I proposed first.[3] I have come down here at a time of crisis in order to see if one big straightforward effort might not be made to avert a great disaster, such as an open breach between the two Governments, and I claim that a proposal I have made to that effect should be discussed on its merits. If agreement is not possible on that point, then everything else is waste of time ; if it is possible, then I will do everything in my power to remove other difficulties out of the way, and I will be engaged in that work while the President is engaged in obtaining the approval of his burghers to the plan on which we both agree—if we agree.

The President's misunderstanding of the importance of the real issue is unaccountable on any other theory than that he never had any intention of coming to an agreement, and was only seeking to gain time.

On the fourth day of the Conference the President said :[4]

It is wholly against God's Word to let strangers carry on the administration, seeing that they cannot serve two masters at the same time.

To which Lord Milner replied :

My proposal absolutely gets over the difficulty about their being strangers.

The whole basis of my negotiations is that they must be citizens of one State or the other. The President must recognise my difficulty. It is an extremely difficult thing for me to propose that the people whose

[1] The italics are mine.
[2] Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 37.
[3] The franchise proposals.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

interests I am defending should give up the citizenship which they at present have, and to which they are sincerely attached. They will not do it readily, but I am sure that this is the only solution; and if I am to recommend this great sacrifice to them, then I must be able to point out to them that they are going to obtain something really valuable in return.

What I say is this: These people are complaining about the way in which the Government fails to regard their interests; they are always complaining, and they very often call on the British Government to help their position in one respect or another. Well, my objection to that state of things is this: I sympathize, and the British Government sympathizes, with many of the complaints they make; but our difficulty is this: we say, if we have to take up their individual grievances, two things will happen: one is, we should be perpetually dealing with internal questions in the South African Republic, which is most objectionable; and the other thing is, that such representations as we may make will not really help them; they will only annoy the Government of the South African Republic, and they will not be productive of really substantial results for the benefit of the people. Therefore, with reluctance I have come to the conclusion that the best way to enable these people to have their reasonable desires attended to is to urge upon them to take up the citizenship of the State in which they are living—that is to say, those of them who desire to live there, and to have their families there, and bring up their children there, and to make it their permanent place of residence. Of course, there are thousands of people who only want to stay in the State for a few years, and go away again; their position is different. I am thinking now only of people who want to make the country their home.

For those British subjects who want to make that country their home, I say it is the best thing to go in heartily as burghers of the Republic; but, then, if they are to resign their British citizenship, let them be really equal citizens of their new State. . . .

President: Tell His Excellency I say he misunderstands the case, and from a very trifling thing he makes a very big thing owing to the people's talk. I say that by taking the oath of naturalization, whereby they become entitled to elect members for the Second Raad,[1] they become lawful burghers, and at that moment they get more than they get in their own country. In their own country they cannot within such a short period choose Ministers, magistrates, or similar officials; but they do this with me, and are they not to be regarded as full burghers because they cannot yet elect certain officials? The only difference is that they cannot yet exercise the full franchise.

The conclusion came on the fifth day of the Conference. The proceedings were very brief, and show that the President, like the Bourbons, had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. The report runs as follows:[2]

President: His Excellency must understand in connection with all I have proposed that I am not ready to hand over my country to strangers.

There is nothing else now to be done.

I have not understood from the reasons given by His Excellency in

[1] It will not be forgotten that the Second Raad was nothing more than the fifth wheel to the coach.

[2] Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 42.

the Memorandum that he has altered his points, but that everything has been rejected.

However, we will look over the Memorandum and give a reply later on.

His Excellency: I can make no further proposal. Has His Honour any idea when the answer will be obtainable? What I mean is, Can we fix an hour to meet again?

President: We will work as hard at it as we can. I regret that our friendly conference here together should result in nothing. I understand from His Excellency's arguments that if I really do not give the whole management of my land and government to the strangers there is nothing to be done. I will try and get an answer ready by three o'clock.

His Excellency: I also regret that our discussion should result on no agreement on the subject; but I must protest against His Honour's repeated assertions that my proposals amount to his giving over his land to strangers. It is not my intention, nor is such a result likely to be produced by anything I have suggested. I suppose the time will come when the various proposals made at this Conference will be before the world, and then I leave to impartial judges to say whether it can be truly said that I proposed anything of the kind.

President: If His Excellency wishes me to take advice from someone who has nothing to do with the government of the State, who, then, governs?

His Excellency: Why not have an advising Council, to be made up of those who are not burghers of the State, but who represent the interests of the Uitlander community?

President: How can strangers rule my State? How is it possible?

His Excellency: My plan doesn't affect the government of the State. There are certain conditions and interests which affect the new population alone, upon which they could give advice to the Government. That is the very reason why more influence of the strangers in the counsels of the State seems to be required, provided they are willing to undertake the burdens of citizenship, and that moderate concessions should be obtained for the management of their own things which don't affect the government of the country. However, I won't pursue the discussion now, and I would only ask His Honour whether, if he thinks that no agreement on this subject is possible, it is desirable to continue the Conference. He could put in his Memorandum in writing, and could communicate it to me at his convenience, but I am quite prepared to meet again if His Honour thinks it desirable.

President: I can only say this in reply, that I hope your Excellency will give due weight to the interests of the Republic in making your report. I would like to continue the discussion, but I think your Excellency only argues on the one thing. If there were anything like concessions on your Excellency's part, I would even take two or three days more to discuss. As things stand now, I don't see how we can agree; but I will give my answer at three o'clock.

At three o'clock the Conference formally broke up.

The general drift of the negotiations at Bloemfontein may best be gathered from the Memoranda alternately put in by Lord Milner and Mr. Kruger. The first, that of the High Commissioner at the morning sitting of June 1, I have

already given, but for purposes of reference and comparison I reproduce it as part of the series :[1]

There are two things I have to consider. I have got to consider the prejudices of the old burghers. I know that, even if I were to convince the President himself, he might have difficulty in convincing other people. Therefore I must, in proposing anything, propose something which it can be made absolutely clear to the old burghers will not swamp them. On the other hand, I have to consider that it is perfectly useless to propose something which will give no satisfaction whatever to the reasonable desires of the new population, which may be rejected at once as totally insufficient, the whole object of the proposal being to give them such an amount of satisfaction as will bring them on to the side of the State, to throw in their lot with it, and to work in future with the old burghers as one people.

Bearing these things in mind, what I suggest is this : that every foreigner who can prove satisfactorily that he has been resident in the country for five years, and that he desires to make it his permanent place of residence, that he is prepared to take the oath to obey the laws, to undertake all the obligations of citizenship, and to defend the independence of the country, should be allowed to become a citizen on taking that oath.

This should be confined to persons possessing a certain amount of property or a certain amount of yearly wages, and who have good characters. In order to make that proposal of any real use for the new citizens, who mostly live in one district in the Republic, and a district which only returns one member in twenty-eight to the First Raad and one in twenty-eight to the Second Raad, I propose that there should be a certain number of new constituencies created, the number of which is a detail upon the discussion of which I will not now enter. But what is vital from my point of view is that the number of these districts should not be so small as to leave the representatives of the new population in a contemptible minority.

The next Memorandum was put in by the President of the South African Republic at the afternoon meeting on Friday, June 2.

As the purpose I had in view at this Conference principally consists in the removal of existing grounds of disagreement, and, further, to provide for the friendly regulation of the way of settling future disputes by means of arbitration, *the following proposals with regard to the franchise must be considered as conditional and dependent on the satisfactory settlement of the first-mentioned points, and on the request that my request to incorporate Swaziland in the South African Republic shall be submitted by the High Commissioner to Her Majesty's Government.*

Subject to the foregoing,[2] I undertake to submit without delay to the approval of the Volksraad and the people *the following proposals about the franchise :*

[1] Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 51.

[2] The italics are mine, and are used to emphasize the mistaken idea of President Kruger that the object of the Conference was to conclude a Kaffir bargain.

I. Every person who fixes his residence in the South African Republic has to get himself registered on the Field-Cornet's books within fourteen days after his arrival, according to the existing law; will be able, after complying with the conditions mentioned under 'A,' and after the lapse of two years, to get himself naturalized; and will five years after naturalization, on complying with the conditions mentioned under 'B,' obtain the full franchise.[1]

A.

1. Six months' notice of intention to apply for naturalization.
2. Two years' continued registration.
3. Residence in the South African Republic during that period.
4. No dishonouring sentence.
5. Proof of obedience to the laws; no act against Government or independence.
6. Proof of full State citizenship and franchise or title thereto in former country.
7. Possession of unmortgaged fixed property to the value of £150 approximately, or occupation of house to the rental of £50 per annum, or yearly income of at least £200.

Nothing, however, shall prevent the Government from granting naturalization to persons who have not satisfied this condition.

8. Taking of an oath similar to that of the Orange Free State.

B.

1. Continuous registration five years after naturalization.
2. Continuous residence during that period.
3. No dishonouring sentence.
4. Proof of obedience to the laws, etc.
5. Proof that applicant still complies with the condition A 7.

II. Furthermore, the full franchise shall be obtained in the following manner:

(*a*) Those who have fixed their residence in the South African Republic before the taking effect of Act 4, 1890, and who get themselves naturalized within six months after the taking effect of this Act on complying with the conditions under I. A, shall obtain the full franchise two years after such naturalization on proof of compliance with the conditions mentioned under I. B (altering the five into two years).

Those who do not get themselves naturalized within six months under Article I.

(*b*) Those who have been resident in the South African Republic for two years or more can get themselves immediately naturalized on compliance with the conditions under I. A, and shall five years after naturalization obtain the full franchise on compliance with the conditions under I. B.

(*c*) Those who have been already naturalized shall, five years after naturalization, obtain the full franchise on compliance with the conditions under I. B.

Then follows a Memorandum put in by His Excellency at the meeting on Saturday, June 3:

I have considered the memorandum submitted by His Honour

[1] It will be seen that the failure to register himself on the Field-Cornet's book within a fortnight after his arrival in the Transvaal would exclude a Uitlander from profiting by the concessions promised.

the President yesterday, and desire to record the following observations upon it.

The scheme proposed is a considerable advance upon the existing provisions as to franchise, which, I assumed, it is intended wholly to supersede.

The points of importance are:

1. That the period required for obtaining the full franchise is reduced from fourteen years to seven, and is, I presume, independent of all conditions other than those specified in the draft itself.

2. That special regard is paid to the persons who, having been resident in the South African Republic before 1890, were deprived by the legislation of that year of the prospect of obtaining the full franchise after five years according to the terms of the law of 1882, which was in force when they entered the Republic.

3. That the present objectionable form of oath is altered, and the oath of the Orange Free State substituted.

These are important changes for the better, and I think the law, if passed, would be calculated to lead gradually to the introduction of a certain number of the Uitlander population to the ranks of citizenship.

I feel, however, that it falls far short of that kind of solution which I have suggested, and which alone appears to be adequate to the needs of the case. I feel a great responsibility in this matter. I wish to be moderate, but I cannot recommend to other people a plan which I feel certain will not succeed. Under this plan, no man who is not already naturalized, even if he has been in the country thirteen or fourteen years, will get a vote for the First Volksraad in less than two and a half years from the passing of the new law. There will be no considerable number of people obtaining that vote in less than five years—that is, if they come in and naturalize. But I fear the majority of them will not come in, because the scheme retains that unfortunate provision, first introduced in 1890, by which, owing to the two stages—first, naturalization with a partial franchise, and then, after five years, full franchise—a man has to abandon his old citizenship before he becomes a full-fledged citizen of his new country. My plan avoided this. My doctrine is that, however long a period of residence you fix before a man becomes a citizen of your State, you should admit him once for all to full rights on taking the oath of allegiance. And this is especially important in the South African Republic, because, owing to the facility and frequency with which laws —even fundamental laws—are altered, the man who takes the oath and thereby loses his old country may never feel quite sure that something may not happen in the interval, when he is only half a citizen, to prevent his becoming a whole one.

The vote for the First Volksraad is the essential point. According to the present constitution of the Transvaal, the First Volksraad and the President really are the State. But under this scheme it will be a considerable time before any number of Uitlanders worth mentioning can vote for the First Volksraad, and even then they will only command one or two seats. My point was to give them at once a few representatives. They might be a minority, even a small minority. I have said over and over again I do not want to swamp the old burghers ; but as long as the representatives of the new-comers are entirely excluded from the supreme legislative council, they will, as a body, remain an inferior caste. The co-operation and gradual blending of the two sections of the population

will not take place. The old separation and hostility will continue. I see no prospect here of that concord to which I had looked both to bring about a more progressive system of government and to remove causes of friction between the Government of the South African Republic and Great Britain.

For these reasons I regret to say the scheme seems to me so inadequate that I think it would be wasting the time of the Conference to discuss its details.

I yesterday threw out the suggestion that, failing an agreement as to the franchise, the President might, as an alternative, see his way to meet the demands of the Uitlanders in another manner, more or less on the lines of Mr. Chamberlain's plan of 1896, by allowing them to control, or at least partially control, the local administration of their own district. But he seemed to be even more opposed to this than to my proposals for the extension of the franchise. That being the case, I am driven to the conclusion that, as far as the Uitlander Question is concerned, the Conference has been productive of no result.

And next in order comes the Memorandum handed in on June 4 by President Kruger as reply to the above:

Before making observations on the important Memorandum handed to me to-day by your Excellency, I wish to revert to the question of an increase in the representation of the new citizens in the South African Republic, which, as already explained this morning, was omitted from my former Memorandum.

I am ready to propose and to recommend to the First Volksraad to increase the number of members of the First Volksraad, whereby the gold-fields will be represented by five, instead of as now by two, members.

Your Excellency will understand that, besides this special representation, the new population will exercise, and already exercise, a considerable influence on the elections in all the other districts where they are, or will be, registered as citizens.

With reference to the Memorandum itself, I wish to express my satisfaction that your Excellency recognises that my proposal with reference to the franchise is a considerable improvement on the existing law, and that your Excellency lays special stress on three improvements of preponderating importance in my proposal.

With reference to the points of improvement, I wish to make some remarks:

1. I have no intention of adding any further limiting conditions to the stipulations put forward by me.

2. The form of the oath as laid down in Orange Free State Constitution shall be accompanied by the legal stipulation having reference thereto as contained in the Constitution, and as read yesterday by me at the making of my proposal to your Excellency.

3. The object of my proposal is to abrogate the portions of the election laws to which my proposal has reference.

4. I wish further to point out that persons who before 1890 came to South African Republic will be able to obtain the *full* franchise in two instead of two and a half years (as your Excellency appears to think) after the coming into operation of the proposed law.

Here attention may also be directed to the fact that according to Law 7 of 1882 the naturalization fee amounted to £25, while in 1890 it was reduced to £5, and later to £2.

I also wish to point out that persons who were naturalized before the

coming into operation of this proposed law will obtain the full franchise five years *after naturalization*, so that, for example, a person who was naturalized five years ago will, immediately after the coming into operation of the law, be entitled to the full franchise.

In further answer, I wish your Excellency to give your most earnest attention to the following considerations:

1. Your Excellency appears to be under a misunderstanding with reference to the rights obtainable by naturalization. Here, as well as elsewhere, citizenship does not necessarily bring with it the full franchise. This difference had already been recognised in the Grondwet of 1858, wherein it was provided that a person becomes a citizen at the age of sixteen years, with the right on the attainment of eighteen years to vote for a military officer, while he could only vote for the Volksraad and President on attaining his majority (twenty-one years), and could only be elected for the Volksraad at the age of thirty years.[1]

Apart from the citizenship, certain qualifications are required for the attainment of the full franchise, under which are taken into account, not only immovable property or income, but also period of residence.

This difference is also recognised in the constitutions and laws of nearly all civilized countries. As, for example, in the Cape Colony and elsewhere, a certain period of registration of the citizens is necessary for the exercise of the franchise, so also in the Republic a certain period of registration is demanded for the same purpose. The fact that the period in the South African Republic must be fixed longer than elsewhere is due to the special and exceptional circumstances, the difficulties in connection wherewith have been acknowledged by your Excellency himself. That a person already becomes a full citizen by naturalization appears, *inter alia*, from this, that at the attainment of the full franchise, after the prescribed period of registration, no further taking of an oath is required, but merely proof of possession of the necessary qualifications.

2. By naturalization the new population obtain, not only the citizenship, but also the right to vote for the Second Volksraad. Thereby they can make their influence felt on all those subjects which are specially placed under the jurisdiction of the Second Volksraad, and which, above all, concern the mining and the general interests of the new population. While the term of registration for the full franchise is thus still running, they have already a vote in the majority of subjects which concern them, and they obtain thereby their fair share in the legislation affecting them.[2]

It is true that the First Volksraad has the power to review the work of the Second Volksraad, but where it concerns the interests of the mining community it has very seldom done so.

Besides this influence on the legislation of the Second Volksraad, the naturalized citizens in the South African Republic also have the right to serve as jurymen, and likewise to select the local officials, such as Field-Cornet, Commandant, and Landdrost, and they obtain thereby a very important influence on the local Government. And in many cases these naturalized citizens did not possess that right in the land of their former citizenship.

3. Not alone in Great Britain, but also in important British colonies—such, as I understand, is the case in the colony of New South Wales—the enfranchised citizens have no vote in the elections of the highest legislative

[1] Lord Milner's proposition did not, of course, claim that age qualifications should be different in the case of Uitlander and burgher.

[2] The value of this argument may be realized by the admission of President Kruger, C. 9404, p. 24, that the Second Raad could do nothing without the consent of the First Raad.

chamber. Regarded from that point of view, the position of British subjects who become subjects here should really be better than it was, whether in Great Britain or in some of the British colonies.[1]

4. I notice with pleasure the renewed assurance of your Excellency that it is not the intention that the old citizens should be outvoted by the new citizens. Just because I feel myself assured of the great and threatening danger hereof in case your Excellency's proposal is accepted, I cannot agree therewith. The immediate granting of the full franchise to such persons as, according to your Excellency's proposal, would be able to make claim thereto would result in an immediate over-mastering of the old citizens.

At any rate, it will not bring about that co-operation and gradual fusion of the two portions of the population which is the object both of your Excellency and of myself. And your Excellency will readily acknowledge that, according to my proposal, this fusion and co-operation would commence immediately—namely, with those who are already naturalized five years or more, and two years thereafter will become strengthened by those who came here before 1890, and will proceed year by year with rapid strides, and that the discord will disappear of itself. I am convinced that if this view of the case is made clear to the new population they will acknowledge the fairness thereof.

5. Coming to the alternative plan of local government for the Witwatersrand Gold-fields put forward by your Excellency, it should be noted that since the suggestion made by Mr. Chamberlain in 1896 a wide measure of local government has been accorded to that portion of the State.

In case experience after a lapse of time should demonstrate that this local government must be still further extended or improved, I have no doubt that then the Volksraad will also make the necessary provision with regard thereto. This, naturally, solely under the reservation that such extension should not affect an *imperium in imperio*, out of which, necessarily, still greater disunion will be created than at present exists.

In conclusion, I desire to remind your Excellency that the acceptance by the people and the Volksraad of the proposal made by me will depend on a proper adjustment of the matters set forth at the beginning of my former Memorandum.

To this a reply in the form of a Memorandum was read by the High Commissioner at the morning meeting on June 5, 1889:

I have carefully considered His Honour's Memorandum of June 3. This document modifies the scheme put in by His Honour on June 2, and adds to the proposals of that scheme the further proposal to increase the number of members of the First Volksraad representing the gold-fields from two to five. The First Volksraad would thus consist of thirty-one members, five of them representing the gold-fields.

The Memorandum now under reply further contains certain comments upon my Memorandum put in at our meeting on Saturday morning last, June 3.

I regret that, even with the additions now made, I cannot regard His

[1] It is needless to point out that in none of the second Chambers cited by President Kruger is there any control of the purse.

Honour's scheme as one which I could advise Her Majesty's Government to accept as a definitive settlement of the difficulties which have arisen in connection with the discontent of the Uitlander population, including a large number of Her Majesty's subjects. The scheme as originally propounded contains no suggestion of an increase of seats. In that form it seemed to me wholly inadequate, and I did not, therefore, see any advantage in discussing it point by point, but confined myself to certain general objections. In its amended form it goes somewhat further, and I therefore think it desirable to examine it in more detail.

The references are to the numbers and letters in His Honour's memorandum of June 2.[1]

1. By I. A 1. Six months' notice is required for naturalization.

By II. (*a*) persons who have fixed their residence in the South African Republic before 1890 can obtain the full franchise two years after naturalization.

I cannot understand how, in view of these combined provisions, it can be disputed that the persons who have fixed their residence prior to 1890, but have never proceeded to naturalization, will require two and a half years to obtain the full franchise. His Honour maintains that only two years are required. But this point is a minor one. What I fail to see is why persons who have been in the country from an earlier date than 1890 should not obtain the full franchise at once. They have a very strong case indeed. Take the instance of a man who fixed his residence in the country in 1886. When he did so he was under the then existing law entitled to the full franchise in five years. Before the expiration of that period a change was made, which in effect postponed the attainment of that full franchise for twelve years. This change was in my judgment a very harsh measure to those already in the country. Whatever restrictions might have been thought necessary in the case of new-comers, the legitimate expectations of people already resident in the South African Republic ought to have been respected.[2] Now it is proposed to do tardy justice to these old residents. But why should they not obtain full franchise at once? Seven years is now fixed as the normal time for obtaining full franchise. Why should the man who came in in 1886, and has already waited thirteen years, have to wait another two and a half years, or even two years?

2. I. A 4 and 5. I am not quite sure whether 'dishonouring sentence' would apply to the members of the Reform Committee of December, 1895, who were subsequently tried and condemned. But, in any case, 'act against Government or independence' could be interpreted, I do not say justly, to include not only them, but everybody who was in any way involved in that unfortunate disturbance, even if he was totally innocent of any design against the Republic. I think it would be a fatal blot on any scheme of enfranchisement if it contained a provision excluding such persons. It was, I believe, the President himself who said, 'Forgive and forget.'

I. A 6. This is a provision which might easily be interpreted in such a manner as to exclude many persons well deserving of the franchise. There is something to be said for confining the franchise to foreigners coming from countries where there is a measure of popular self-government. But even in these cases 'proof' of 'full State citizenship and

[1] See above, p. 630.

[2] This argument, it should be observed, covers, and is restricted to, a period long antecedent to the Raid.

ranchise or title thereto' might be difficult to furnish. Take the case of a man who was under age when he left his native country, and for that reason not entitled to franchise, or who had not possessed in his native country the necessary property qualification, if there is one. I might put other cases, but I do not wish to labour the point. This is one of several provisions in the proposal which might be made instruments of exclusion in the hands of officials whose bias was against the Uitlander.

I. A 7. The property qualification seems reasonable, but £200 a year as an income qualification is excessively high. Entirely objectionable, in my view, is the proviso which allows the Government to dispense with the property qualification altogether. The conditions of obtaining burgher rights ought not to be alterable, either upwards or downwards, at the pleasure of the Government. If there are circumstances under which it is thought desirable to allow persons to become burghers who do not possess the necessary property qualification, those conditions should be clearly stated.

I. B 2. 'Continuous residence' (*gedurig verblijf*). These, again, are words which, as it seems to me, might be used to exclude people unreasonably. If they mean that any absence from the South African Republic on pleasure or business during the five years between naturalization and the full franchise should preclude a man from obtaining the latter, they would exclude numbers of Uitlanders who had nevertheless had their permanent home in the country all the time.

I now pass from the original proposal to the addition made in His Honour's Memorandum of June 3, dealing with the increase of seats. I may say at once that, while I have an open mind as to the number of new seats for the gold-fields, and for that reason did not attempt to lay down any definite number in my own proposal, I think three is decidedly too few. Under this proposal the enfranchised new-comers might—not immediately, but after the lapse of several years—obtain five seats in the First Volksraad. Add, perhaps, two for other constituencies in which they would in time become a majority, and they would be seven out of thirty-one. By that time they would be a vast majority of the inhabitants, and would contribute—as they indeed already do—almost the whole revenue. Under these circumstances less than one-fourth of the representation seems a scanty allowance. But the great point is, that even this limited degree of representation is still a long way off. My aim was to obtain some representation for them immediately. In my view, the First Volksraad has already been too long out of touch with the new population, with whose most vital interests it is constantly dealing, and not dealing wisely. Every year that this state of things continues increases the tension and the danger. I do not assert that the mistakes made are due to ill-will. I believe they are due to want of knowledge. If representatives of the new population could make their voices heard, if they could come in contact with the representatives of the old burghers on an equal footing in the First Raad, they would, without being a majority or anything like it, yet exercise an appreciable influence on legislation and administration.

His Honour endeavours to meet my argument on this point by saying that new burghers will, immediately on naturalization, have a vote for the Second Raad, and that the Second Raad deals with the matters in which they are most immediately interested. With all respect, I really must demur on this point. In the first place, the Second Raad has absolutely no power in matters financial. Taxation is not within its province, and it has no power over expenditure, except such limited amount as the First Raad may, for certain purposes, put at its disposal.

Now, financial matters happen to be of the greatest importance to the people who supply the revenue. No doubt the Second Raad can legislate, subject to the First Raad and to the President, on a number of matters affecting the industrial community. But when it comes to affairs of really first-rate importance, the First Raad always deals with them. Take the report of the Industrial Commission. That was the most important event in the whole history of the industry. That report was received with unanimous and hearty approval by the mining community and the whole Uitlander population. It was dealt with exclusively by the First Raad. It was a committee of the First Raad which, in the teeth of the protests of the people interested, cut down many of its proposals, and, finally, the First Raad itself knocked the bottom out of the whole thing. Look at the fate of the Advisory Board. That was surely as moderate a proposal in the direction of letting people manage their own affairs as was ever made. It was a proposal to which the mining community attached the greatest importance. Yet the First Raad would have none of it. Or, again, take the question of public order on the gold-fields or the question of education. These, too, are vital questions for the Uitlanders. Does the Second Raad deal with them? They are entirely in the hands of the First Raad and of the Government.

It is the extreme importance of the vote for the First Volksraad and for the President which makes me regard the position of the new-comer who has forsworn his old citizenship without obtaining this right, as so unsatisfactory. I am sure the bulk of the new settlers, certainly all the British, who wish to make the Transvaal their home, would rather wait five, or even seven, years for burghership if it at once conferred all the rights as well as all the obligations of the old burghers, than come in under the present proposal. The President objects to my saying that the man who is naturalized is not altogether a burgher. Well, let us admit that the correct description of him is that he is a burgher, with all the obligations of a burgher, but with only half the rights that any old burgher attains, without conditions, on coming of age. The fact that citizenship in many States does not confer franchise, or full franchise, or does not confer it without other qualifications, is no answer to my argument that in a State where the bulk of citizens do possess full franchise, without other qualifications, the citizen who does not possess it is a citizen of an inferior class. To that inferior class of citizenship a man who has taken the oath under the present proposal may, owing to various circumstances, find himself permanently confined. And meanwhile he has forsworn his former country.

To sum up: I regret that the President has not seen his way to enlarge his proposals. They are, as I have already said, a decided improvement on the present franchise laws. But if I am asked whether I think they will satisfy the Uitlander community and are calculated to relieve the British Government from further solicitude on the score of its Uitlander subjects, I cannot answer in the affirmative. Still less can I encourage the idea that the British Government can be asked to give something in exchange for such legislation as the President proposes. My own proposal was put forward in no bargaining spirit. I asked myself, in advancing it, what is the smallest measure of reform that will really be of any use—that is to say, which will allay the present unrest and enable the Uitlanders to exercise within a reasonable time an appreciable influence on the Government of the country. It was in that spirit that I suggested the outline of a scheme, intentionally not working it out in detail (for I was ready to listen as to details), but indicating a certain minimum from which I am not prepared to depart.

The President seemed to regard my scheme as a very alarming one. I do not think it alarming, but I admit it involved a considerable change of policy. But it is no use proposing any small change. This Conference is a very exceptional thing. The situation is grave, else we would not be discussing here. If I have urged the Government of the South African Republic to take a considerable step to allay the discontent among a large portion of the inhabitants, it is because of my firm conviction that no small measure would any longer be of any use. The Government has much to atone for in its past treatment of the Uitlanders, and it has much—indeed, it has everything—to gain in silencing their present complaints and in removing the long list of Uitlander grievances from the field of controversy between Her Majesty's Government and the South African Republic.

The President evidently does not realize how far I was willing to go in the direction of compromise when I was prepared to drop all other questions connected with the position of British subjects in the South African Republic, if only I could persuade him to adopt a liberal measure of enfranchisement. The petition of British Uitlander subjects to Her Majesty has yet to be dealt with. It is evident that Her Majesty's Government think the complaint of the petitioners in many respects well founded, and that they are only waiting for the result of this Conference before addressing the Government of the South African Republic on the subject. When I came here I came in the hope that I might be able to report to Her Majesty's Government that measures were about to be adopted which would lead to such an improvement in the situation as to relieve Her Majesty's Government from pressing for the redress of particular grievances on the ground that the most serious causes of complaint would now gradually be removed from within. I do not feel that what His Honour has seen his way to propose in the matter of franchise or what he indicates as the extreme length to which he might at some future time be willing to go in the extension of local government is sufficient to justify me in reporting in that sense.

The last Memorandum of the series was put in by President Kruger on the afternoon meeting of June 5, 1899.[1]

I wish to express my regret that the proposal about the franchise submitted by me to His Excellency has been found by him to be unacceptable.

My proposal went as far as it was possible to go in the interests of my people and State, and in principle it is impossible for me to depart from it.

In regard to the subordinate points touched upon by His Excellency, I only wish to remark that the intention thereof was not to limit or to hinder in an unreasonable manner the admission of the new-comers among the burghers of the South African Republic, and thus to take away with one hand what has been given by the other; and if my proposal should eventually be placed among the laws of the land, His Excellency would see that in this respect it was my intention to act in a fair and reasonable manner.

I would be prepared, in the spirit of concession, to further discuss and deal with the details touched upon by His Excellency; but as His Excellency refuses even to accept the principle of my proposal, it would be needless to go further here into particulars on this point.

[1] Blue-book, C. 9404, p. 59.

As regards the increase of the representation in the First Volksraad, His Excellency will understand that it is not possible for me to bind the future legislation altogether, and that the limit of thirty-one mentioned by him cannot necessarily be a final one as regards the representation either of the old or the new inhabitants.

Although His Excellency, to my greatest regret, refuses to accept the proposal as a reasonable concession to the new population of the South African Republic, he still acknowledges that it is a decided and considerable improvement on the existing law, and he will also readily acknowledge that it is desirable to have it confirmed by the Legislature of the South African Republic, even apart from the fact that in His Excellency's opinion it does not go far enough.

On the other hand, His Excellency has also acknowledged that my request for arbitration by other than foreign Powers on all points of future difference under the Convention is reasonable, and that it is altogether desirable to have such differences settled according to an automatic plan.

It is, further, our common opinion that in this case there should be no bargain or compromise made in the matter, as matters which are in themselves desirable ought to be also treated on their own merits. The question of arbitration, therefore, could be arranged, apart from the acceptance or non-acceptance by him of my proposal with regard to the franchise.

Arguing on these lines, and as it is my earnest wish that this Conference should not be fruitless, I wish to make the following proposal to His Excellency, viz.:

As, according to his own admission, my proposal about franchise is an important step in the right direction, I shall be prepared to lay my proposal before the Volksraad and to recommend it, even though His Excellency does not fully agree with it. From his side I shall then expect that His Excellency will lay before and recommend to Her Majesty's Government my request about arbitration on future matters of difference under the Convention.

His Excellency will, however, readily understand that if Her Majesty's Government should not meet me so far, so as to grant my acknowledged fair request for arbitration, it could be with difficulty expected that the people of the South African Republic would approve of my comprehensive proposal with regard to franchise.

Regard being had to my strong wish to have all differences settled amicably by arbitration, and by so doing to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two Governments, and also with an eye to the peace and friendship between all white races in South Africa, I have not scrupled to go so far that I have conferred with His Excellency in a friendly way even over strictly internal affairs, and my strong trust is that this my wish shall not remain unfulfilled.

So closed the Conference at Bloemfontein, of which so much had been expected. Of those who were responsible for the meeting of the High Commissioner and the President of the South African Republic, only one was animated by a single-minded desire to play the game with the cards upon the table, and to negotiate without mental reservation of any kind. I have only heard of one criticism of the spirit

in which Lord Milner entered the Conference. Curiously enough, the criticism is to be found in a most unexpected place. Mr. J. A. Hobson, in his book on the war in South Africa, makes this curious and significant comment:[1]

> It was impossible to go far in such a political inquiry as that which I undertook without perceiving that the most serious obstacle to an amicable settlement was the profound distrust of one another's motives entertained by the negotiating parties. Sir A. Milner did not hesitate to pronounce duplicity to be the distinctive trait of the Boer Government. When I reached Pretoria, I found that the same word contained the essence of Boer criticism upon British diplomacy. How could a real and lasting understanding be reached between such controversialists? The Cape Ministers, divided in their estimate of Mr. Kruger's policy, were united[2] in denouncing the tactlessness of the Chamberlain-Milner method. Sir A. Milner, they held, utterly failed to understand the Boer character, and could not get at any point into sympathetic touch with it. This was made manifest by the proceedings at Bloemfontein. 'How differently,' one of them put it to me, 'would Rhodes have handled the business in the days before the Raid had made him an impossible negotiator! Instead of bombarding the old man with a display of officialism, and seeking to wrest from him admissions by dint of academic argument, Rhodes would have said to his attachés, 'Now, all you fellows, clear out,' and then he would have sat down by the fire, lighting cigarettes, while the old man smoked his long pipe. And they would have talked over things for a couple of days, so as to get to really understand one another before entering on any formal attempt at settlement.' Sir A. Milner's method was to treat Kruger as a nineteenth-century, up-to-date European diplomatist instead of a slow-thinking, suspicious, seventeenth-century Puritan farmer, and a conference upon these lines was foredoomed to failure.

Now, I have said enough elsewhere in my estimate of Mr. Rhodes' character to prevent the possibility of misinterpretation with regard to what I have to say on the score of this ingenuous criticism. I believe it is true that Mr. Rhodes, as a non-official negotiator in the pre-Raid days, or any other amateur diplomatist, might have obtained more in the way of apparent concession from the 'slow-thinking, suspicious, seventeenth-century Puritan farmer' than Lord Milner succeeded in doing at Bloemfontein. Mr. Rhodes would have known, as Lord Milner certainly knew, the value and attractiveness to an average Boer politician of a Kaffir bargain. He would have started by demanding infinitely more than he was prepared to accept, and would at the

[1] 'War in South Africa,' p. 6.

[2] This assertion, as will be seen later, is absolutely untrue as regards two of the most important members of the Ministry—Mr. Schreiner, the Prime Minister, and Mr. (now Sir Richard) Solomon, who was his Attorney-General.

earlier stages of the negotiation have kept any apparent concessions he was prepared to make up his sleeve. The result, no doubt, would have been that Mr. Kruger would have advanced his terms as the other side lowered his; his *amour propre* and his Dutch love of a deal would have been gratified had he been able to announce to his fellow-Boers that he had compelled his opponents to knock off 75 or 50 per cent. of the price they originally demanded for a settlement, and the concessions, real or imaginary, produced towards the close of the chaffering by the British representative would have been paraded as a triumph for Boer diplomacy. The result ,as I have said, in such a case would probably have been a proffer, with many mental reservations, of better terms than Lord Milner was offered at Bloemfontein. The method I have described is that of the Turkish bazaars. In the Transvaal as at Constantinople, buyer and seller both understand the conditions of the game. Practically at the beginning of a deal each has made up his mind as to the sum he is prepared to give or receive for the object of the bargain. With two rivals equally matched in skill and knowledge of the game, there is probably a very small margin of difference between the price one is prepared to pay and the other is ready to accept; but before this agreement is revealed a great deal happens. The would-be buyer tenders a sum far below that which he is really prepared to pay; the vendor, on the other hand, demands a sum which he knows to be extravagantly exorbitant, and which he has no expectation whatever of obtaining; and so, through gradual steps of alternate abuse and cajolery, the two parties at length arrive at what both of them knew from the beginning would be the common denominator. There is nothing immoral or undignified in such a system of bargaining so long as it is conducted on the one side and on the other with the full appreciation of the rules of the game. Such methods, however, one is thankful to think, have always been alien and distasteful to British statesmen in their negotiations with the representatives of other nations. I do not, of course, mean that the British representative enters into a Conference with a cut-and-dried scheme in his pocket, which he tells the other side they can either take or leave, as they

please. There is always room for compromise about details, and for such a compromise Lord Milner left himself and his Government an ample margin. But it is not our custom to chaffer about principles. The very principle which Lord Milner laid down, and from which he refused to budge, was in itself essentially a compromise. He said, in effect, to President Kruger: The state of affairs in the South African Republic is fraught with the gravest danger to the peace of South Africa. For the maintenance of that peace Her Majesty's Government is responsible before the eyes of the world. The dangers which menace it arise out of the oppression of the Uitlanders, of whom the large majority are British subjects, and out of their degradation to a level far inferior to that of the burgher. Daily I am inundated with specific complaints of unfair treatment on the part of Uitlanders, which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, are justified and demand a redress. On general grounds, as well as on the particular ground of the conventional relations between Great Britain and the South African Republic, Her Majesty's Ministers claim a right to intervene if the more crying of these wrongs remain unremedied. From such intervention, unless it becomes absolutely inevitable, the British Government is naturally averse. It has arrived, therefore, at the conclusion that the difficulty can be overcome without injury to the independence of the Republic by affording the Uitlander population the means of redressing its own grievances in the manner recognised in all constitutionally governed States. If the franchise is given to men of good character who have made their homes in the Transvaal, and are prepared to undertake the full burdens of citizenship, and if they are allowed representatives in the Volksraad, numerous enough to make their voices heard, but not so numerous as to swamp the representatives of the old burghers, we should be able in future to reply to all who came to us with grievances: 'You have a representation of your own, and you are no longer subjects of ours; you must therefore work out your own salvation, as others have done in similarly constituted States.' But before this compromise was endorsed by the paramount Power it was clearly essential that two conditions must be fulfilled: (1) That the remedy

should be adequate; (2) that, in view of the acute stage which the disease has reached, it should be immediately applicable. To neither of these conditions would President Kruger assent. To the latter, which was by far the more pressing, he turned an absolutely deaf ear, and the concessions which he was prepared to make with regard to the former were not only trifling, but were honeycombed with loopholes. President Kruger and his advisers could hardly be insensible to the acutely feverish state of the Uitlander population in Johannesburg. They were well aware that the indignation of the non-burgher population, evoked by a bitter experience of promises made only to be broken, had been kept in check with difficulty by the influence of the High Commissioner. These 'slow-thinking, suspicious, seventeenth-century Puritan farmers' might not know much of the world outside the boundaries of the Transvaal, but they could not fail to be sufficiently acquainted with human nature to be assured that men of high spirit, nurtured in the atmosphere of free institutions, would not lay aside their discontent in return for a promise that, at the end of two years and a half, a faint beginning should be made in the reparation of their wrongs. It was idle to tempt Britons to divest themselves of their privileges as British subjects by an undertaking (which a single resolution of the Volksraad could annul) that within a space of seven years they should enjoy the full privileges of burghers of a backward State. Had President Kruger consented to the terms proposed by the High Commissioner, the number of those who would have entered into the enjoyment of full citizenship would have been absolutely and relatively very small. But the other Uitlanders still outside the pale would have felt that an earnest had been given them of the sincerity of the Boer Government to listen favourably to their complaints. As it was, they regarded President Kruger's proposal as a mockery and an insult. Perhaps no greater proof of confidence was ever extended to a statesman than that which the loyal inhabitants of South Africa gave to Lord Milner at this time. It is no exaggeration to say that the High Commissioner's acceptance of President Steyn's invitation to the Conference at Bloemfontein had been inwardly regarded

by the loyalists of Cape Colony and the Uitlanders of the Transvaal with deep and not unjustified misgivings. They had a bitter experience of the astute and adroit policy by which the 'slow-thinking, suspicious, seventeenth-century Puritan farmers' had got the better of trained English statesmen in many a similar deal. But such was their determination to show confidence in Lord Milner, and so strong was the hold which he had established over their minds, that they kept their apprehensions to themselves until the Conference came to an abortive end.

There is a story told of Napoleon at St. Helena, that upon an occasion he asked his entourage what the world would say when he was dead. Naturally, the various replies were couched in terms of more or less extravagant adulation. 'No,' said the Emperor, 'you are all wrong. The world will say "Ouf!"' 'Ouf' represented the feelings of the loyalists of South Africa when they heard that the High Commissioner had returned to Cape Town uncommitted and uncompromised.

A remarkable deputation, representing what the *Cape Times* described as 'all that is worthiest and most influential in the city and peninsula,' waited upon Lord Milner upon his return to present him with an address.

The Hon. A. Ebden, in making the presentation, said:[1]

Those who have been instrumental in getting up this meeting have deemed it wisest and best, under the circumstances, that their views should be embodied in the form of a Memorandum, rather than that any one of their number should express their views off-hand. They consider this is a most important occasion, and they are therefore desirous that their views should be carefully stated.

Mr. Ebden then read the following document:

On behalf of the citizens here assembled, and, I venture to say, of many thousands throughout the length and breadth of the land, I beg to assure your Excellency of the admiration with which the firm stand made by you on behalf of the rights of the Uitlander population of the Transvaal at the Bloemfontein Conference is regarded. They feel that the proposals you made on their behalf were moderate and statesmanlike, and such as should commend themselves to moderate men of all classes, inasmuch as, while opening the door of citizenship to the Uitlander, you fully safeguarded the position of the existing burghers. They desire to express their satisfaction that, having put forward suggestions of that character,

[1] Blue-book, C. 9415, p. 15.

your Excellency so clearly marked your sense of the impossibility of accepting proposals which, in their opinion, would have brought little relief to the unrest and dissatisfaction now existing. They therefore wish to offer their earnest and firm support to your Excellency in such reforms as will secure the just representation of great and expanding interests. We all sincerely hope for a peaceful solution of all differences, and earnestly wish to see the Transvaal Government accepting the policy of trusting their subjects and working with them for the common good. It is not without a deep sense of responsibility that these views are urged upon your Excellency at this critical juncture in the affairs of South Africa, but those for whom I speak feel deeply that, in the interests of the future of this country, they should be fully and firmly expressed. In conclusion, I desire to give expression to the entire confidence we all feel in the fairness and ability of your Excellency to bring these unhappy differences to a satisfactory settlement.

His Excellency, replying, said :

Mr. Ebden and Gentlemen,—I need hardly say that I am deeply grateful for your expression of sympathy and support. It is rather difficult to choose words in which to reply to it. At a time of anxiety like the present, one is anxious to avoid any word which could possibly do harm. At the same time, a few words may do good if they tend to clear the issue. As you are all aware, the recent Conference led to no result. It led to no result because the whole discussion turned on the question of the franchise, and on that no agreement was possible. It may be asked, Why was so much weight attached to this one question? Well, I fully admit the franchise is only a means to an end, and the end is to obtain fair play for the Uitlander population in the South African Republic. That is the main concern which Her Majesty's Government has in view—the protection of the Uitlander population, containing as it does so large a proportion of British subjects. My view was, and is, that the best way to help those people, best for them, best for the Republic, and best for the good relations between the Republic and Her Majesty's Government, is to put them in a position to help themselves.

It may be that I conceded too much, it may be that I went too far in giving other questions the go-by for the moment, and directing all my efforts to secure for the Uitlanders a position within the State. But my view was this: It was a unique opportunity. To have pressed for the redress of Uitlander grievances one by one, to say nothing of other subjects of difference, would have been to engage in an irritating controversy, and to spoil the chance of an amicable compromise on broad lines going to the root of the differences. That controversy, which I was so anxious to avoid, may have to come yet, but my object at the Conference was to avert it. It seemed best to strike straight at the root of the evil by giving the people whose interests Her Majesty's Government is bound to defend such a share of political power as would enable them gradually to redress their grievances themselves, and to strengthen, not to weaken, the country of their adoption in the process. But just because I was relying on a single remedy, it was absolutely essential that that remedy should be a radical one.

It was useless—indeed, worse than useless—and would only have led to worse trouble later on, to have accepted a scheme so framed—I do not say so designed—as not to bring people in, but to keep them out—a scheme hedged in with restrictions of the most elaborate kind, and hampered with a condition which I knew that numbers of people would

never accept, and which one could not reasonably urge them to accept. If this Reform Bill was not going to bring a considerable number of Uitlanders into the State, if the enormous majority, including all the leaders, were still to remain outside, how was it possible to feel any confidence in such a solution or accept it as a comprehensive settlement?

As against this, it is urged that my simpler plan would have deluged the State with new citizens. I am convinced that this is not so. Having regard to the obligations of burghership, and to other reasons which will, in any case, deter many Uitlanders from applying for it, and to the conditions as to length of residence and proper qualification which I was quite prepared to make, I feel sure that the number of new citizens would not have been anything like so great as was supposed. And however numerous they might have been, the old citizens would have controlled for a long time the bulk of the constituencies. They, too, are increasing rapidly in number, and long before they could have been outnumbered, if they ever were outnumbered, the process of fusion would have begun to set in. Moreover, it is not as if the Uitlanders were all of one kind or one mind. They are of various nationalities, and represent different interests and opinions. The President told me (he was very strong indeed on the point) that he had a petition from Uitlanders in favour of the Government signed by an even greater number of people than signed the petition to Her Majesty. Well, then, what was there to fear? Half the new-comers, on his own showing, would have been on his side, and many, I am sure, who are now opposed to him—opposed, as you may say, to the State because they are excluded from it—would be loyal citizens the moment they were in the State.

No doubt it is a difficult business to get different races to pull together inside one body politic. That is the problem over all South Africa. But it is solved in other parts of South Africa, more or less. It would be solved altogether and for ever if the principle of equality could be established all round. It is the one State, where inequality is the rule, which keeps the rest in a fever. And that is bound to be universally recognised in time. Meanwhile, for the moment, the attempt to get things put on their true basis has not succeeded, and we have to face the resulting situation. Some remedy has still to be found to remove, at least in some measure, the grievances of the Uitlanders and to allay their discontent.

I am absolutely convinced that those grievances, though sometimes stated in exaggerated language, are very real. It has over and over again been my duty to call attention to the fact. And there is another aspect of the case which has been forced upon me as High Commissioner, having to bear in mind the interests of South Africa as a whole. Is it consistent with the position of Great Britain in regard to this country—nay, is it consistent with the dignity of the white race—that a large, wealthy, industrious, and intelligent community of white men should continue in that state of subjection which is the lot of the immigrant white population of the Transvaal? That is a position which we have, by some means or other, however gradual, however pacific, to get them out of.

I see it is suggested in some quarters that the policy of Her Majesty's Government is one of aggression. I know better than any man that their policy, so far from being one of aggression, has been one of singular patience, and such, I doubt not, it will continue. But it cannot relapse into indifference. Can anyone desire that it should? It would be disastrous that the present period of stress and strain should not result in some settlement to prevent the recurrence of similar crises in the future. Of that I am still hopeful. It may be that the Government of the South

African Republic will yet see its way to adopt a measure of reform more liberal than that proposed at Bloemfontein. If not, there may be other means of achieving the desired result. In any case, it is a source of strength to those who are fighting the battle of reform, and will, I believe, contribute more than anything else to a peaceful victory, to feel that they have behind them, as they perhaps never had before, the unanimous sympathy of the British people throughout the world.

Shortly after this speech the *Cape Times*, under the editorship of Mr. Garrett, published a very searching analysis of the proposals of the Transvaal Government, examined from the point of view of the Uitlander:

The registration official (says the *Cape Times*[1]) who drafted the proposals put forward by President Kruger at the Bloemfontein Conference, as being the utmost limit to which the Transvaal Republic were prepared to advance, deserves—from his point of view—every recognition of his work. They are probably the most cunningly devised set of obstacles to registration for Parliamentary purposes which have ever been placed before the public. We will only deal with a few of the most glaring of them, quoting the clause in President Kruger's Memorandum in each case.

I. 'New-comers, registering themselves within fourteen days after arrival, to obtain naturalization after two years, on complying with the following conditions :'

We will take the conditions later. Let us first deal with the fourteen-days question. It means that any new-comer to the Transvaal who does not within a fortnight of his arrival register himself can never, even if he resides there for fifty years, have any chance of obtaining the franchise. The object and utility of this condition, from President Kruger's point of view, is obvious. The last thing a man thinks about during the first two weeks of his arrival in a country is politics or electoral registration ; few have even decided by then whether they are likely to remain permanently in the strange land. And under this clause, once let the fortnight slip, and the right to be registered would be gone for ever.

II. 'Six months' notice of intention to apply for naturalization.'

This proviso, if it does nothing else, will insure delay, and will also afford Transvaal officials time during which to find reasons for objecting to a man being naturalized.

III. 'Proof of obedience to the laws ; no act against the Government or independence.'

This means that no man could be naturalized before he has proved that he has committed no act against the Government. Voting or working against a candidate who supported the Government in power would presumably be an 'act against the Government.' Things being as they are, what sort of political Uitlander is he likely to be who can satisfy that test through seven years ? It should be noted that the onus of proof that a man has been obedient to the laws of the country is thrown upon the applicant for naturalization. It does not rest with the objector to prove the contrary. The man who would have to be satisfied that sufficient proof had been brought forward would, of course, be an official of the

[1] June 10, 1899.

same sort of calibre as those connected with the late 'Jameson Burgher' exposure.[1]

IV. 'Proof of full citizenship and franchise, or title to it, in former country.'

Therefore every man who wishes to be naturalized will have to prove that when he left home he was on the list of registered voters for the district in which he resided, or that he was entitled to be on, but that his name had been left off in error. What proof will President Kruger's officials require in this matter? Possibly the personal evidence given before him of a resident in the district from which the applicant comes—say some part of Yorkshire—that he had before he left there for the twelve months preceding July 20 (the date fixed in England for registration purposes) inhabited, according to the English franchise laws, as owner or tenant, a dwelling-house rated for the relief of the poor, of which the rates due up to January 1 had been paid by July 12, either by the occupier of the premises, owner, or other person rated. Or, assuming that a man happened to be on the register at the time he left home, perhaps he would be expected to carry in his pocket a copy of the Parliamentary register, and also to bring another man along with him to identify him as being the person so described on the list. Note that under this clause no man who left home before he was twenty-one could ever obtain the franchise.

V. 'Two years' continuous registration.'

This probably means that a man would have to go through certain formalities during these two years, the non-performance of which on any one occasion would forfeit him his right to be naturalized, and therewith his right to be enfranchised some years later, and would throw him back to the original starting-point.

The above conditions, all of which have to be fulfilled, and which would be spread over a period of two and a half years, only refer to naturalization. Let us now examine some of the further obstacles which a man desiring to obtain a vote would have to surmount before he could be actually enfranchised.

I. (*a*) Continuous registration for five years after naturalization; (*b*) continuous residence during this period.

What would this mean in practice? It would mean that, if during the course of these five years President Kruger's official by *mistake* left his name off the list for one year, the aspirant for the franchise would have to start afresh, and go through another period of five years of registration. Mistakes in the way of leaving voters' names off the register are not unknown in Bond Field Cornetcies in this colony; similar errors might possibly happen in the Transvaal. Is it difficult to picture young men growing old, but never quite succeeding in gaining the franchise? Wearily climbing up four years of the ladder, and then, owing to their name being accidentally slipped off the list on the fifth year, having to start again for a fresh period of five years' probation, thanks to this 'continuous' regulation? But apart from this, certainly no man who wished to get the franchise could, under any circumstances, go to Europe (we doubt even if he could come to the colony for a few weeks) during all the seven and a half years of his probation without breaking the required 'continuous residence,' and forfeiting all his chances of ever being placed upon the register of voters. That rules out at once the best class of business men in most lines of business. We will not for the present go into the

[1] The 'Jameson Burgher' was any Uitlander whom, having taken the part of the Government in the troubles of 1896, the Government thought fit to enfranchise without any conditions or qualifications whatever.

other obstacles proposed, but will deal with the case of the man resident in the Transvaal before 1890.

II. 'Residents in the South African Republic before 1890 getting naturalized within six months from the promulgation of this proposed law, and giving six months' notice of their intention to apply for naturalization, to obtain full franchise two years after naturalization on complying with the conditions of full franchise mentioned above, substituting two for five years. Those not getting naturalized within six months to fall under the already mentioned conditions for new-comers.'

What does this mean? A man must give six months' notice of his intention to apply for naturalization, and he must also get naturalized *within* the same six months. Therefore, unless a man formally applied on the day of promulgation and on no other, he would forfeit all the benefits which, perhaps, he might otherwise derive from having been in the Transvaal before 1890. One day, and one day only, will be given; and unless a man is present on that day and goes through the necessary formalities, he will lose five years, and have to wait for seven and a half before he could possibly become entitled to vote.

The above are only some of the conditions—or, rather, obstacles—contained in President Kruger's anti-registration scheme. If similar provisions were in force in the colony, there is not a shadow of a doubt that not one man in fifty now on the register would ever get there. If a man had endeavoured to devise a scheme for keeping people from being registered, he could not have drawn up a more perfect one than that which President Kruger gravely proposes. Even were the proposed registration law the fairest and most generous imaginable, the one solid and insurmountable fact remains, that the officials who will adjudicate upon the claims of any Uitlander to be placed upon the list of voters will be officials appointed, paid and controlled by President Kruger, and liable to dismissal at his pleasure. With all these means at their disposal for keeping off those ranked as 'ill-disposed,' they would be strangely untrue to all past experience if they failed to use them.

The Uitlanders of Johannesburg gave a single proof of their confidence in the High Commissioner by heartily accepting his very modest proposals for reform, though it was notorious that the majority regarded them as inadequate to do justice to their grievances. As, however, it had been proposed by Lord Milner, they were ready to give the experiment the fullest and most loyal trial. They held a great meeting, attended by some 5,000 persons, on June 11, at which the following resolutions were unanimously and enthusiastically carried :[1]

That this meeting hereby affirms the principle that no settlement of the constitutional problem in this country can be satisfactory which does not provide for the recognition of the equal political rights of all white inhabitants; second, that the franchise proposals submitted by His Honour President Kruger at the Bloemfontein Conference are, in the opinion of this meeting, wholly inadequate, and will not satisfy the just demands of

[1] Blue-book, C. 9415, p. 24.

the unenfranchised population of this country; third, that we record our deep sense of obligation to Sir Alfred Milner for his endeavour to secure redress of grievances for this community, and earnestly desirous as we are of supporting His Excellency in his efforts to obtain a peaceful settlement, we are prepared to endorse his very moderate proposals on the Franchise Question, as the irreducible minimum that could be accepted. . . . To a question put by the chairman whether the audience would not only accept, but avail themselves of, a liberal measure of franchise they unanimously expressed their willingness.

Of this meeting Mr. Conyngham Greene said it was the largest and most enthusiastic ever held in Johannesburg. But at least as significant as the speeches made and the resolutions passed at this meeting was the letter read from Advocate J. W. Wessels, who had a large practice in Pretoria, and had described himself five years before as 'an Afrikander of Afrikanders, without a solitary drop of English blood in his veins.'

Anyone (he said in his letter[1]) who knows the feelings of the Uitlander population of Johannesburg must know that half-measures will do no good. It is with them now a matter of sentiment and a feeling of degradation. Unless their sentiment can be satisfied, and unless this feeling of inferiority can be done away with, the Uitlander Question will be a festering sore in the vitals of South Africa. Some say the sentiment is folly, and the feeling of inferiority unreasonable. It may be so, but I am convinced that these feelings are firm-rooted, and cannot be eradicated until a fair, just, and full franchise is given to the Uitlanders. I am Afrikander born, and yield to no man in love for my country; and I will state my views openly, though I know I am detested by a large body of my countrymen for entertaining these views. Hated or not hated, I feel that these views are right and just, and that they will one day prevail. They who prevent the Uitlander from getting a full and fair franchise seem to me narrow-minded and bad statesmen, the evil genii of this Republic, the cause of intense racial feeling, and the authors of future evils too awful to contemplate. I do not anticipate that British subjects will flock to the registration offices if a five years' full franchise were offered them, but I do know that their sentiment will be appeased, their ideas of justice will be satisfied, and their feeling of antipathy to the governing class in this country will be allayed. No man likes to belong to an inferior caste, an Englishman least of all. No man likes to have his inferiority flaunted in his face at every turn, and, unfortunately, the legislation of recent years has done that to the Uitlanders but too frequently. . . .

Sir Alfred Milner said in the late Conference: 'My doctrine is that, however long a period of residence you fix before a man becomes a citizen of your State, you should admit him once and for all to full rights on taking the oath of allegiance, and this is specially important in the South African Republic.' These words are absolutely true. I, who have been thirteen years in this country, and am still an unenfranchised Afrikander, feel that these words are not only true, but wise and statesmanlike. The period of probation is repugnant to all Uitlanders and to a great many

[1] *Cape Times*, June 13, 1899.

burghers. No franchise law that contains this provision can ever allay the unrest and satisfy the Uitlander. . . . Nothing short of a full franchise after a certain term of years can allay the unrest and satisfy the Uitlander sentiment. The term of years should not be an impracticable term—five, six, or seven years at the utmost. There should be a property qualification and adequate proof of residence, such as a court of law would accept. There may be provisions to exclude the criminal class, but further there should be no restrictions. Past residence should also be taken into account; but whatever the number of years may be, if the Uitlander can prove that he has been domiciled here for the term of years required, then he should be admitted to the full franchise. As General Joubert has lately said, he must be able to demand it, not to beg for it on his knees. Unless the Raad passes some such measure and opens the door freely, unsuspiciously and honestly to the Uitlanders, I feel certain that we shall always have dissatisfaction and unrest, and this country, which might be prosperous, will gradually fall back instead of advance. But if there is one thing more than another for which I loathe and detest this illiberal policy of excluding the Uitlanders from the full franchise, it is that I firmly believe that it adds more to the race hatred that we see around us than any other thing that I know of. It feeds and waters the roots of race hatred in this country, from whence it spreads its trunk and branches over the whole of South Africa. May the Legislature of this country realize the evil that has been wrought, and atone for the past by soon giving the Uitlander the hand of friendship and that share in the government of this country to which in the eyes of every just man he must appear to be entitled.

While these were the views of the Uitlanders in Johannesburg, and of loyal subjects, not only in Cape Colony, but in Natal, Mr. Schreiner, as Prime Minister, authorized the *South African News*, the English organ of the Afrikander Bond, to state that his Government regarded the latest proposals of the South African Republic as 'adequately satisfactory, and such as would secure a peaceful settlement.'[1]

The significance of this communication was emphasized by a paragraph in a speech delivered by President Kruger to the Second Raad on June 15, 1899, in which he asserted that

the enemies of the Republic were collecting their strength, and by dissension and discord were working to rob the people of their independence. If all South Africa was unanimous these difficulties would not exist. The twenty-three thousand foreigners who had declared themselves satisfied with the Republic must be assisted, but those foreigners who made a noise about anything should get nothing.[2]

There were subsequent modifications made, removing

[1] This refers to certain possible modifications in President Kruger's scheme, which were communicated, not to the High Commissioner, but to Mr. Schreiner.

[2] Blue-book, C. 9415, p. 39.

some of the more glaring defects of President Kruger's proposals at Bloemfontein; but the so-called concessions expressly excluded the immediate application of the most moderate instalment of reform, which was the essence of Lord Milner's proposition. Telegraphing to Mr. Chamberlain on July 13, 1899,[1] he comments upon the latest proposals as embodied in a Bill laid before the Volksraad :

You will observe (he says) that main lines of Bill are :

1. Provision as to naturalization after two years, and full franchise five years later, maintained; but there is alternative whereby a person can postpone naturalization till end of seven years, and be naturalized then, obtaining full franchise at once. 2. Retrospective clause allows person to obtain naturalization with full franchise after nine years' residence, or in the alternative five years after passing of law, provided he has seven years' residence.

Thus, all persons who entered country before middle of 1895 must have nine years' residence, those who entered between middle of 1895 and middle of 1896 eight years', and later immigrants seven years'.

These are main principles, and are certainly considerable advance on President's proposals at Bloemfontein. But attempt to represent them as differing very little from mine is idle, as, apart from difference between five and seven, immediate effect very different. My proposal would have admitted at once persons who came to country during 1891, 1892, 1893, and portion of 1894. These were years of great immigration. These persons are now postponed for between one and four years, so that body of Uitlanders immediately admitted far smaller than that contemplated by me. . . .

Speaking generally, the formalities requisite in applying for enfranchisement are cumbersome and calculated to cause difficulty and delay. This is a very serious matter, as affecting number likely to obtain franchise at an early date. There is, moreover, a very objectionable provision which makes the seven years for franchise in case of new-comers date, not from the commencement of their period of residence, but from the time of their giving notice of intention to become naturalized.

And in a telegram to the Colonial Secretary on the following day Lord Milner states :

The whole point of my Bloemfontein proposal was to put Uitlanders (? in a position) to fight their own battles, and so to avoid necessity of pressing for redress of specific grievances. In present strained situation there is no use in any scheme, the effect of which in this respect is doubtful or likely to be long deferred. From this point of view I always regarded my Bloemfontein proposal as something like a minimum, and even too moderate, perhaps. If that proposal had been accepted in principle, and discussion proceeded as to method of carrying it out, I should have resisted cumbrous and restricting provisions like those of present Bill as calculated to make the privileges apparently accorded needlessly difficult to obtain. The fact that this measure is, in its general scope, considerably less liberal than my scheme makes those restrictions

[1] Blue-book, C. 9415, p. 44.

none the less objectionable. As provisions of Bill are more closely examined, feeling against it among friends of Uitlanders is increasing.

The Uitlander Council of Johannesburg summed up the objections to the measure in its latest form as follows :[1]

The whole law is so carelessly drawn, so badly expressed, and the grant of the franchise so beset with conditions, as to plunge its meaning into obscurity in the first instance, and in the next to render it an exceedingly difficult matter for any applicant to make good his case should the Government be disposed to avail themselves of the ample means provided to burke his attempt to procure the franchise. It is supposed to be a remedial measure, and is ostensibly framed to remove a condition of things which form a real and substantial grievance, and to make the obtaining of the franchise less difficult. It appears, however, that it is expressly designed to exclude rather than admit the new-comer. Practically speaking, the proposed law leaves the granting of the franchise almost entirely in the hands of either the officials or of the Government. They are to be satisfied as to the proofs required, and in many cases some one or other of them is to be the issuer of the certificates demanded from the new-comer. It is, in fact, a most dangerous measure, and apparently framed with the object of defeating the end it is presumed to have in view. The draft is stated to be an amendment, and not a repeal of the existing franchise laws. Consequently, the provisions of the present laws, in so far as they are not expressly repealed by the new measure, would remain in force. Thus the naturalized burghers would not be entitled to vote for the President, and it is even doubtful, in view of the provisions of Law 4 of 1890, whether they can vote for the First Volksraad unless a resolution to that effect be taken by the First Volksraad, and regulations which have never yet been framed be complied with.

It must not be forgotten when criticising the Government's proposals that at present there is no suggestion of a Redistribution Bill. No measure for franchise would be of the slightest use, unless it was supported by an adequate scheme of redistribution, seeing that the new-comers constitute more than two-thirds of the entire population.

In conclusion, it must not be forgotten that any law on this subject will in reality afford no protection or assistance to the Uitlander, no matter how liberal may be the concessions in his favour, for there is absolutely nothing to prevent the Volksraad at any moment from so amending it as to postpone or entirely deprive the probationer of his citizenship before it actually matures.

It is obvious from what we now know, but was only suspected at the time, that President Kruger had a very specific object in standing by his determination to postpone for two years anything like a considerable extension of the franchise to the Uitlanders. If he could gain this respite it mattered to him little or nothing how many apparent concessions he made with regard to the future. Before the two years could elapse, and the good faith of his concessions be

[1] Blue-book, C. 9415, p. 57.

tested, a General Election must have taken place in England. That there is no doubt on this point is made manifest by the suggestions contained in the letters from Dr. Te Water which I have already quoted, in which he was reminded that the present British Government would not last for ever, and that a new 'team' less unjustly disposed towards the Transvaal would probably be in power, and that the rope, if slackened to meet the exigencies of the moment, might be tightened again hereafter. That fact, coupled with the knowledge that frequent communications were passing between the Afrikander party in South Africa and their friends in England, warrant the conclusion that during these prolonged and complicated negotiations President Kruger was only playing, as Dr. Te Water had advised him, for time. Mr. Chamberlain reviewed the state of the negotiations in a despatch to Lord Milner bearing date July 27, 1899, the substance of which is given in a telegram of the same date, which I propose to give in full:[1]

27th July. No. 5.—Following is substance of despatch which goes by next mail: Successive modifications made by Government South African Republic since Conference have followed rapidly on each other and have been difficult to understand as reported by telegram. Happily, each new scheme seems to have been improvement, and Her Majesty's Government hope latest proposals may prove to be basis for settlement on lines which you laid down at Conference.[2] Convenient to state objects which Her Majesty's Government have desired to secure and reasons which have led them to press their views on Government South African Republic. Her Majesty's Government authorized you meet President in hope that you might arrive at arrangement which they could accept as reasonable concession to just demands of Uitlanders. They trusted that, following on such amicable settlement, differences between Governments might be adjusted and relations placed upon harmonious footing. Their hopes were for the time disappointed. Government South African Republic in despatch of 9th June (see your despatch of 14th June) deplore increase of party feeling and race hatred as result of disputes between two Governments, by which whole of South Africa suffers most deeply and is bowed down. Her Majesty's Government agree indirect consequences of strained relations are even more serious than results particular acts of legislation or administration, but they must point out that this deplorable irritation is primarily due to fact that in South Africa Government South African Republic alone has deliberately placed one of two white races in position of political inferiority, and has adopted policy of isolation in its internal concerns which has been admitted by present

[1] Blue-book, C. 9518, p. 12.

[2] The first part of this sentence has been quoted repeatedly by the pro-Boers, and always, so far as my observation goes, without the governing words, 'on lines which you laid down at the Conference.'

Prime Minister Cape Colony to be source of danger to South Africa at large. Conventions were granted in full expectation that, according to categorical assurance by Boer leaders in negotiations preliminary to Convention of 1881, equality of treatment would be maintained. In spite of these positive assurances, all the laws which have caused grievances and all the restrictions as to franchise and individual liberty have been brought into force subsequently to Convention of Pretoria or London. Not only has letter of Convention of 1884 been repeatedly broken, but whole spirit has been disregarded by this complete reversal of condition of equality between white inhabitants. Responsibility of Her Majesty's Government is further increased by fact that it was at request of High Commissioner that people of Johannesburg permitted themselves to be disarmed in January, 1896. High Commissioner's request was made after issue by President South African Republic of Proclamation of 30th December. Unfortunately, assurances conveyed in this Proclamation have been no better observed than assurances of 1881. Her Majesty's Government believed that acceptance of invitation to Bloemfontein was indication of Government South African Republic being prepared to make adequate proposals. But proposals actually made during course of proceedings were not such as could in any way be accepted as meeting case. Her Majesty's Government have approved of your having put in foreground grant of such measure reform as would give Uitlanders at once reasonable share of political power, for although even if such privileges were fairly and fully conceded there would remain many causes of difference, still, such concession would afford Uitlanders opportunity for formulating grievances and influencing legislators and Government, and eventually would doubtless secure redress without necessity of appealing to any external Power. Her Majesty's Government have also observed with approval that, in view of refusal of President to grant effective share in government to Uitlanders, you pressed on him as proposal not open to any of the objections urged by him to grant of liberal franchise possibility of granting municipal government for Johannesburg in reality as well as name. Her Majesty's Government heard with regret President declined to entertain your suggestions. Since Conference new proposals were submitted to Volksraad in draft of Act officially communicated to British Agent 12th July. This draft was advance on President's earlier proposals, but, after most careful examination, Her Majesty's Government reluctantly came to conclusion that they could not regard new scheme as affording any basis for settlement of the question, or as one which would give immediate and reasonable share of political representation. Her Majesty's Government learn with satisfaction from your telegram of 19th July that Government South African Republic have still further amended their proposals, and that Volksraad has now agreed to give franchise at once to those who have been resident in country for seven years. This proposal is advance on previous concessions, and leaves only difference of two years between you as far as franchise is concerned. However, it is obvious that, as you pointed out at Conference, no practical result could follow from any franchise unless conditions are reasonable and newly enfranchised burghers obtain fair share of representation in First Volksraad. Object of Her Majesty's Government has been to secure for Uitlanders such immediate share of political power as will enable them to exercise real influence on legislation and administration without swamping influence of old burghers. They observe, however, that in new draft of Act there are still conditions which might be interpreted so as to preclude those otherwise qualified from acquiring franchise. Her Majesty's Government feel assured that President, having accepted

principle for which they have contended, will be prepared to reconsider details which can be shown to be possible hindrance. They therefore trust that many of conditions now retained may be revised, and that residential qualifications may be further reduced. Her Majesty's Government assume that concessions now made are in good faith intended to secure some approach to equality promised in 1881, but points they have still to urge for consideration Government of the South African Republic are of great importance, and require further interchange of views between two Governments. These points involve complicated details and questions of technical nature, and Her Majesty's Government are inclined to think most convenient way of dealing with them would be that they should first of all be discussed by delegates appointed by you and by Government of South African Republic, who should report result of consultation and submit recommendations to you and to that Government. If satisfactory, agreement on these points can be reached in such a way and placed on record, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it should be accepted by Uitlanders, who in this case will be entitled to expect that it will not be subsequently nullified or reduced in value by any alterations in law or acts of administration. Settlement of this most important subject will greatly facilitate understanding in other matters. With view to settlement of some at least of these questions, Government of the South African Republic has met representations of Her Majesty's Government with offer to submit them to arbitration of a foreign Power. In view of relations established by Conventions, Her Majesty's Government have felt compelled to declare emphatically that under no circumstances will they admit intervention of any foreign Power with regard to their interpretation of Conventions. Her Majesty's Government note, however, with satisfaction that at Bloemfontein South African President withdrew proposal for intervention of foreign Power; he has modified former proposal so as to substitute for foreign Power foreigner as President. This proposal, although in different form to those previously made, is equally objectionable, inasmuch as it involves admission of foreign element in settlement of disputes between Her Majesty's Government and Government of South African Republic; for this reason it is impossible to accept it. Her Majesty's Government, however, recognise that interpretation of Conventions in matters of detail is not free from difficulty. While, on the one hand, there can be no question of interpretation of preamble Convention of 1881 which governs Articles substituted in the Convention of 1884, on the other hand, there may be fair differences of opinion as to interpretation of details of those Articles. If President is prepared to agree to exclusion of any foreign element, Her Majesty's Government would be willing to consider how far and by what methods such questions of interpretation could be decided by a judicial authority, whose independence, impartiality, and capacity would be beyond and above all suspicion. After discussion by delegates of details and technical matters in relation to political representation of Uitlanders, it may be desirable that you should endeavour to come to an agreement with President Kruger by means of another personal Conference. In this case occasion would be suitable one for you to discuss with President matter of the proposed Tribunal of Arbitration and those other questions which were not brought forward at Bloemfontein, but which it is most desirable to settle at early date.

It would be as tedious as useless to follow in detail the negotiations, if such they can be called, which ensued upon

the receipt of Mr. Chamberlain's despatch. But it is not amiss here to quote the opinion expressed as late as July 31, 1899, by the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada, which was surely as impartial a body in the circumstances as could be found. The following resolutions were adopted unanimously :[1]

1. Resolved, That this House has viewed with regret the complications which have arisen in the Transvaal Republic, of which Her Majesty is Suzerain, from the refusal to accord to Her Majesty's subjects now settled in that region any adequate participation in its government.

2. Resolved, That this House has learned with still greater regret that the condition of things there existing has resulted in intolerable oppression, and has produced great and dangerous excitement among several classes of Her Majesty's subjects in Her South African possessions.

3. Resolved, That this House, representing a people which has largely succeeded, by the adoption of the principle of conceding equal political rights to every portion of the population, in harmonizing estrangements, and in producing general content with the existing system of government, desires to express its sympathy with the efforts of Her Majesty's Imperial authorities to obtain for the subjects of Her Majesty who have taken up their abode in the Transvaal such measure of justice and political recognition as may be found necessary to secure them in the full possession of equal rights and liberties.

The Senate of the Dominion Parliament passed with equal unanimity a series of resolutions identical with the above. It was by no means only from the class which their opponents stigmatized as 'Jingoes' that a strong position was taken upon this subject. It is a very open secret that Lord Salisbury was most reluctant to put such pressure upon the South African Republic as might involve an actual rupture. One of the main principles which determined his foreign policy was the concentration of the offensive and defensive forces of the Empire, in order that, if occasion should arise, they might be available for the defence of Imperial interests in the case of any great European convulsion; and as the statesman upon whom the Queen inevitably relied for support and assistance in her declining years, he was naturally more than anxious to spare her the horrors of a great war at the close of a reign which had been chiefly conspicuous for the triumphs of peace. Yet, with all these factors combining to impose upon him, if possible, a policy of compromise and conciliation, the Prime Minister

[1] Blue-book, C. 9518. p. 58.

realized that the situation in South Africa had become intolerable, and could only be permanently improved by such concessions on the part of President Kruger as would secure equality for the two white races in the South African Republic. In a very moderate speech which he made in the House of Lords[1] he summarized the position:

Throughout the whole of the period (he said) which has elapsed since 1881, President Kruger's one effort has been to separate the English and the Republican Governments, to divide the nations into two camps, and to give the Dutch a superiority to which their numbers give them no title, and to reduce the English to a condition almost of a conquered, certainly of a subjugated, race. I do not entirely blame him for the kind of panic which seems to have seized on him and his advisers at the irruption of the gold-diggers of 1886. It was not a very attractive population at first sight, and it is quite conceivable they might have felt some anxiety lest these gold-diggers should be able so completely to obtain the government that the Dutch might suffer precisely the disadvantages which the British are suffering now. I can understand and, to a certain extent, make some allowance for that apprehension; but where I blame him is, that when this difficulty came upon him, instead of remembering the engagement which he had entered into with his English people, instead of remembering the recognition of the position of England, which in those two Conventions is, at all events, to a great extent manifestly and unquestionably recognised, he placed himself in an attitude of sheer opposition, and never came to the English Government to consult them as to how this great and marvellous phenomenon of the irruption could be dealt with. I do not think anyone could have said to him, 'You are bound to allow your population to be overwhelmed and swept away'; but it is obvious that goodwill and consideration should have prompted him to give sufficient protection to the Uitlander and British population without entirely annihilating the Dutch population. . . . I believe that if the burghers showed a real desire to eliminate that race disqualification, and to put the two races fairly and honestly on the same footing, I think they might look forward to a peaceful solution of a crisis which is undoubtedly serious. How long we are to consider that solution and what patience we are bound to show, these things I will not discuss. We have to consider not only the feelings of the inhabitants of the Transvaal, but, what is more important, the feelings of our fellow-subjects.

But it was not only from the Tory Prime Minister that this grave warning emanated. It would be difficult to find a more typical Radical than Mr. Robson, K.C., M.P., nor one more fitted to express an opinion upon the so-called concessions of President Kruger as an alleviation of the grievances of the Uitlanders. After the war had actually broken out, Mr. Robson wrote a letter to the *Times*, in which he said:[2]

[1] July 28, 1899.

[2] The *Times*, October 28, 1899. I have taken this and several other extracts dealing with this period from Mr. E. T. Cook's 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War.'

The conditions attached to naturalization and franchise in the Act are of such a character as make the period of qualification utterly unimportant. It might almost as well be seventy years as seven. . . . It is supposed that the Act was a general measure of enfranchisement for Uitlanders. Nothing of the sort. It was a measure enabling the Boer officials to enfranchise those rare and remarkable Uitlanders who might for years have enjoyed the personal acquaintance of the Field-Cornets and Landdrosts of the wards and districts in which they have respectively lived. And it must apparently have been something more than a slight acquaintance, for those officials are to certify entirely from personal knowledge as to (1) domicile, (2) continuous registration, and (3) obedience to the laws on the part of the Uitlander; and, moreover, that he has not been guilty of any crime against the independence of the country, whatever that may mean. Of course, the framers of the Act had it well in their minds that the Uitlanders are a separate community, speaking a language proscribed in all official relations, so that knowledge of them by either officials or burghers would not be likely to extend to a seven years' acquaintance of the personal character required. Therefore they felt quite safe in giving an alternative to the Field-Cornet's personal knowledge. They allow him to give his certificate on the affidavits (from personal knowledge, of course) of two 'notabele' burghers of the Uitlander's ward and district. A 'notabele' burgher is officially defined as being one who is 'more than respectable.' Where are the working men, or anybody else on the Rand, who can claim a seven years' acquaintance with Boer neigbours of such distinction, and where are the 'more than respectable' Boers who can, or would, make the necessary affidavits on his behalf? But when the impossible has happened, and all these things have been done by and for the Uitlander, he must still produce 'further proof of good behaviour,' such as will satisfy the State Secretary and the State Attorney. And so the Act goes on. I have given you a small selection of its absurdities, but they suffice to show that, as a measure purporting to give immediate and substantial representation, it is 'a grotesque and palpable sham.' Of course, the Boer officials would by means of it be able to let in as many Uitlanders as they thought hostile to England, but the number who could honestly fulfil the conditions of the Act is obviously insignificant, and even they could not compel the officials to enfranchise them.

But a still more unimpeachable authority, from the Boer point of view, is that of the letter of Sir Henry de Villiers, I have already given in full, from which I will now only quote the one sentence in which he said that 'the very best friends of the Transvaal feel that the Bill providing for the seven years' franchise is not a fair or workable measure. It is this manœuvring to escape an unpleasant decision which has more than anything else driven the British Government into its present attitude.' It may be, as even Mr. Schreiner pointed out, that the obstinacy of President Kruger, and the constant 'wriggling' of which Sir Henry de Villiers complained, were due to the false hopes of external assistance which Mr. Leyds or some other

accredited agent in Europe had transmitted to Pretoria. For Mr. Schreiner had said:[1]

After war had been declared, they wanted no more embassies in Europe sent to try and stir up ill-feeling and hostility against the British Empire; that unfortunate embassy had been more than anything else responsible for this war. There were limits to tolerance, and that limit was almost reached when one considered the part that the head[2] of that embassy had played. He firmly believed that the unfortunate Republics had been led to suppose that the great Powers in Europe were about to interfere on their behalf, and they must have been misled by the assumption and assurances conveyed to them by their emissary.

I do not, as I have said before, propose to follow the doublings and shifts of President Kruger to the last stages of these negotiations. For one reason, that work is most admirably done in Mr. Cook's 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' which furnishes an excellent and exhaustive analysis of this tortuous game; and my other reason is that the policy of President Kruger is exposed and denounced by the best friend the Transvaal had outside its own borders, the Chief Justice of Cape Colony. The spirit in which matters were viewed by the extremists in the Transvaal may be gathered from one of those little indications which are even more significant than official indiscretions. On July 7, 1899, when matters had not reached an acute stage, the editor of *De Rand Post*, a bitter anti-English organ of Johannesburg, addressed the following ominous letter to the editor of the *Leader*, a Uitlander paper:[3]

SIR,

I come to you begging for a little fairness.

However much your paper policy may differ from mine, however much you may work for English supremacy and I for the Dutch, who certainly have right, and possibly might, on their side, such difference should not lead you to altogether destroy the reputation of fairness the English claim as their monopoly. Whenever occasion arises, you drag into your editorial writings '*De Rand Post*, a Dutch paper published in this city,' as 'preaching the gospel of wholesale murder.'

This statement is based on the fact tnat we have written: '*If* war breaks out, the Johannesburg agitators are the real instigators, and to these ringleaders capital punishment should be meted out.'

As every educated man knows, such is and has been the just fate of the leaders of revolutionary movements far more justified than the present one, and in which no such unfair men and means were brought into force.

[1] 'Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War,' p. 300. [2] Dr. Leyds.
[3] Blue-book, C. 9521.

These hard words were a sensible—and, after all, they still may prove as effectual—warning to quiet people to refrain from taking part in the dangerous movement then and now on foot.

However this may be, the *Rand Post* never preached 'wholesale murder,' and your inimical feeling towards the Transvaal cause should not cause you to speak untruly, and by so doing grossly to libel your opponents.

I have the honour to be,

M. P. C. VALTER,
Editor 'Rand Post.'

What Mr. Valter's ideas of wholesale murder may be it is difficult to estimate, but the proposal to execute British subjects for appealing to their own Government for redress of grievances savours more than a little of methods of barbarity, and the allegation that the supporters of Mr. Kruger were struggling for Dutch ascendancy may be recommended to those who deny the existence of any conspiracy to depose Great Britain from the position of paramount Power. That the *Rand Post* was not speaking for itself alone may be gathered from a statement made by Mr. Lombard in the Volksraad on July 16, in which he said, *inter alia*:[1]

Was it the English only who had the right to make conditions? If it came to be a question of war, there would be a great destruction, and who would be destroyed if it came to a collision? Why, the subjects of Her Majesty in Johannesburg.

It is true that from time to time modifications and so-called improvements of the concessions which the Transvaal Government was prepared to make were put forward. But they were always accompanied by conditions or clogged by qualifications which rendered their acceptance impossible. The situation was reviewed by Lord Milner in a despatch dated August 23, 1899,[2] from which I take the following:

The Government of the Republic now offer to grant the franchise to persons possessing a certain property qualification who have resided five years in the country, and to add eight seats to both the First and Second Volksraads, raising each of them from twenty-eight members to thirty-six, these new seats being all assigned to the Rand district. It is certain that this offer will be represented as a liberal fulfilment of the demands put forward by me at Bloemfontein, and a strong effort will be made to induce Her Majesty's Government to accept it as closing the controversy between them and the Government of the South African Republic.

How far is such a view justified?

The position taken up by me at the Conference, and the state in which the differences between the Governments were left by the break-

[1] Blue-book, C. 9521, p. 37. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

down of the Conference, have been very generally misunderstood. A particular proposal put forward by me, not even a definite and detailed proposal, but a mere outline, a basis for discussion, with regard to a single question, has been treated as if it were by itself not only a panacea for the grievances of the Uitlanders, but a settlement of all the questions at issue between Great Britain and the South African Republic.

I refer to the proposal that Uitlanders possessed of a certain amount of property or income, and having resided five years in the country, should be allowed 'to *become citizens*'[1] on taking the oath of allegiance, and that at the same time, in order to give these new citizens an immediate voice in the State, there should be a certain number (the number was never specified) of new constituencies created for the districts in which they principally reside, so as not to leave their representatives 'in a contemptible minority.'

This question, the admission of Uitlanders to full citizenship, which, according to the Constitution of the South African Republic, carries with it a vote for both Volksraads and for the President and Commandant-General, was put by me in the forefront of the discussion. I never said —indeed, I carefully guarded myself against the assumption—that an agreement with regard to this matter would put an end to all differences. What I did say was that it would greatly reduce the number of questions at issue between the two Governments, while it would, by establishing better relations between them, make it much easier to arrive at a satisfactory understanding on questions not connected with the grievances of the Uitlanders.

My idea was that, with the admission of the Uitlanders to citizenship, they might be left to fight their own battles. Matters of constitutional reform within the South African Republic need no longer be a concern of Her Majesty's Government. On the other hand, there are subjects of dispute between the two Governments, such as the position of British Indians or of Cape Boys, the violation of the Zululand boundary (Sambaan's country), the rights of Swaziland concessionaires, the protests of foreign land-holders against the War Tax, etc., which plainly were not connected with, and could not be laid to rest by, the satisfaction of the political aspirations of the Uitlanders. For Uitlander grievances, great or small, the admission of Uitlanders to an influential position within the State was the true remedy. As regards other differences, all that could be said was that once that Uitlander grievances, the gravest of all causes of friction, were in a fair way to removal, other differences could be discussed in a calmer atmosphere and with a better chance of agreement.

At Bloemfontein, however, we never got to these matters. We never even got beyond the first stage in the discussion of the proposal to give citizen rights to the Uitlanders, which, as a means of enabling them to right their own wrongs, appeared to me to deserve the foremost place in the discussion. My views as to what would be adequate in that respect differed so widely from President Kruger's that, after four days of argument, it seemed hopeless to find any common ground, and the Conference came to an end with no result but that of showing how inflexibly opposed President Kruger was to the idea of giving the Uitlanders any substantial share of political power.

The consequence of this breakdown has been that the mere outline of a plan, with which I started the discussion, and which was never worked out in any detail, has come to be regarded as a complete and final scheme for the reform of the Government of the South African Republic. I

[1] Italics throughout are Lord Milner's.

thought I had sufficiently guarded against such a misconception by the very explicit statements which I made at the close of the Conference. The Conference did not fail because President Kruger rejected a cut-and-dried scheme of mine, covering the whole ground, but because, on the first point brought forward, the discussion of a tentative proposal of mine revealed so complete a divergence in the views of the two parties as to the necessities of the situation that it seemed useless to continue.

No doubt the point in question was a very important one. It was, if I may so describe it, a test point. I deliberately put it in the forefront because I thought the treatment of it would show better than anything else whether the President's coming to the Conference really indicated a change in the attitude and temper of the South African Republic—a disposition to depart from its hostility to the Uitlanders and suspicion of Her Majesty's Government—or was merely a move in the diplomatic game, intended to stave off for a while the growing urgency of our representations at Pretoria. In order to give the experiment a fair chance, I myself adopted an extremely conciliatory attitude, as I felt that no other course was suitable for an occasion when the attempt was being made to substitute friendly conference and co-operation for our long-drawn-out diplomatic conflict.

I think it is obvious that the suggestion made by me at Bloemfontein, with the object and under the conditions just described, with reference to the admission of Uitlanders to citizenship, ought to be judged in the spirit, not in the letter. It is the general scope of it, not a particular detail, which is of importance. Indeed, I purposely went very little into detail—hence the inordinate importance which has been attached to the only detail I did put forward with any definiteness—I mean the five-years term. Now, I do not for a moment wish to imply any misgivings about the five-years term. On the contrary, the more I learn of the facts, the more I am disposed to think that it really is a reasonable term, fair to both parties. All that I wish to emphasize is that what I was fighting for was not 'five years' franchise retrospective,' but a principle, and one which I do not think any fair person reading the proceedings of the Conference as a whole can fail to realize. That principle was simply this: the substitution of the power of self-protection on the part of the Uitlanders, through their becoming members of the State, for the imperfect protection they at present enjoy from the Convention or from whatever diplomatic action Her Majesty's Government may take, outside the Convention, for such of them as are British subjects. My idea was to enable the Uitlanders, or a large number of them, to become, if they chose, citizens of the State, *exactly on the same footing as the old citizens*, undertaking the same responsibilities, but endowed with the same privileges. No half-citizenship was, from my point of view, and having regard to my main object, admissible, even for a time, much less permanently. 'For those British subjects,' I said, 'who want to make that country their home, I say it is the best thing to go in heartily as burghers of the Republic; but then, if they are to resign their British citizenship, let them be really equal citizens of their new State.' In one respect alone was I disposed to depart from this principle of the absolute equality of new and old citizens, namely, with regard to their relative voting power. Though the Uitlanders are scattered more or less throughout the Republic, and will be more and more widely diffused as time advances, and its mineral resources are developed, the vast majority of them are at present congregated in a single district. To leave that district, which, on the adoption of any reasonable terms of admission to citizenship, would include—according to my estimate—at least 15,000 new citizens, with only two members, when the average

throughout the Republic is about one member to every 1,000 burghers, would be to place the new element at altogether too great a disadvantage. Moreover, under ordinary circumstances, it would be at least two years before either of the seats in question became vacant. It was a necessary corollary of a large admission of new citizens in a limited area that that area should have some increase of representation, and it was equally necessary, having regard to the intense strain resulting from the prolonged disregard by the Government and Volksraad of Uitlander grievances, that the voices of Uitlander representatives should be heard at an early date in the ruling Council of the nation. But, on the other hand, I felt and feel that, in view of the populousness of the district mainly inhabited by Uitlanders contrasted with the scanty white population of most of the Boer districts, the demand for an *exactly equal proportion* of members in the two classes of constituencies would not be justified, at any rate at first, as the old population could not be expected to face with equanimity the prospect of being at once outnumbered. It was an idle fear, in my opinion, in any case, but, inasmuch as it was not an unnatural one, I was prepared for any reasonable concession to guard against it. This might have been done, as it seemed to me, and may still be done, by agreeing that there should be, for the present, a fixed number of seats—not so few as to leave the Uitlanders without substantial influence, and not so many as to 'swamp' the old burghers—and by establishing for the future a system of periodic redistribution according to numbers, which should, however, fix a somewhat larger number of voters for each member in the industrial than in the rural constituencies. It must not be overlooked that the Uitlanders are not a homogeneous body. Excluding those foreigners and British who would not in any case desire to become citizens, either because their stay is temporary or because they attach too great a value to their present citizenship to abandon it for any reason whatever, the new population is composed of the most various elements—of Orange Free State and Colonial Dutchmen, who are more or less akin to the present oligarchy, as well as of colonial-born British and immigrants from Great Britain, who are, no doubt, in the main out of sympathy with the existing régime. The admission of so various a body of new-comers would not, I think, result in the long-run in a sharp division between the new and the old citizens, but would facilitate the gradual fusion which is desirable, always provided that the new-comers were strong enough to exercise some immediate influence in the direction of more liberal laws and a purer administration, in which the vast majority of them, however they may differ in other respects, have a common interest.

Such being the spirit and aim of my proposals, I think it is plain that any measures of reform which are now put forward as a compliance with them should be judged, not by their conformity with one or more details—however important - of the outline of a scheme suggested by me at Bloemfontein, but by their general adequacy to carry out the object which I had in view. I am glad to observe, from the report of the debates in both Houses of Parliament, that Her Majesty's Government appear also to regard the matter in that light. Unfortunately, the various measures, which have been successively proposed by the Government of the South African Republic, and the whole manner in which the question has been dealt with by them, is calculated to inspire but little confidence in their desire to deal with the question of the admission of Uitlanders to citizenship in the willing and generous spirit which is so important to its success. The effect of the successive changes introduced into their original plan has certainly been to make its conspicuous features—five years' residence

as qualifying for franchise and eight new seats for the Rand District—as liberal as anything that I was prepared to suggest. But, on the other hand, the successive proposals have all been encumbered by a number of provisions against which the Uitlanders have vehemently, and, as it seems to me, with reason protested, as calculated to make attainment of citizenship in many cases impossible, and to deprive the new citizens of that equality which it was our fundamental object to secure. Moreover, the changes made have been so numerous and so rapid that it has been absolutely impossible at any given moment to know what the effect of the scheme, as existing at that moment, was likely to be. There has been no time and no opportunity for examination. And at the present juncture, when fresh and most important changes have just been suggested by the Government of the South African Republic, I, for one, am totally in the dark, and Her Majesty's Government must be equally in the dark, as to the exact nature of what we are asked to accept, and to accept on condition of our expressly renouncing the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the Republic—including, of course, the question of the political rights of the Uitlanders—for the future.

In view of the immense importance of many of the details of franchise and redistribution as bearing on the question, whether the Uitlanders will or will not obtain an immediate position of influence in the State, and such further influence in the future as the growth of their numbers may justify, I feel that it is absolutely essential that the latest proposal should be carefully examined. Without such examination it is equally impossible to say whether it carries out the spirit of the reforms which I advocated at Bloemfontein, or whether Her Majesty's Government can recommend it to the Uitlanders as a 'reasonable concession to their just demands.' Such examination is all the more necessary because of the extreme obscurity and complexity of the existing laws of the South African Republic bearing on this subject. The new measures must be looked at, not only by themselves, but in conjunction with the whole body of legislation affecting the case. Nor can the Government of the South African Republic, if sincerely desirous of meeting the views of Her Majesty's Government, object to such examination.

I cannot, within the limits of the present despatch, indicate in detail the several points which must be safeguarded if we are to be in a position to accept the latest measures as giving the Uitlanders possessing the requisite qualifications a *bonâ-fide* and complete citizenship. Nothing is further from my mind than any desire to criticise the proposals of the Government of the South African Republic in a captious spirit, or to make difficulties about matters of minor importance. The questions of a vital character have been carefully noted, and will be raised if the Government of the South African Republic give us a reasonable opportunity of looking before we leap. If these can be fairly dealt with, but not otherwise, Her Majesty's Government will be in a position to regard this part of the controversy between themselves and the South African Republic as arranged in a manner consistent with the promises made to the Uitlanders, and a hopeful basis for the settlement of all differences will have been arrived at.

With regard to other questions not directly connected with the grievances of the Uitlanders, my strong conviction is that all of them to which any real importance attaches should be disposed of now, so as to leave us with a clear slate. Nothing could be more deplorable than that, after the terrible strain of the last few months, a number of unsettled issues should remain between us and the Government of the South African Republic, and the diplomatic relations between us be liable to

slip back into their old unsatisfactory condition. Assuming that an arrangement is come to with regard to arbitration, some of these questions, like the War Tax and the differences as to the interpretation of the Swaziland Convention, might be left to be decided in that way. But there are others, which are not capable of being submitted to arbitration, and these, so far as they are important, should be dealt with now, or else be now, as part of a general settlement, definitely abandoned. Of the matters which we cannot refer to arbitration, and cannot, in my view, without discredit or risk of a speedy revival of difficulties, abandon, I would specially refer to (1) the position of British Indians, (2) the position of other coloured British subjects, and (3) our claim that all British subjects should be entitled to treatment at least equally favourable with that of the subjects of any other nation. The latter claim has been put forward by us on many occasions, as, for instance, with regard to commandeering, but it has never been formally admitted by the South African Republic, and unless it is so admitted now I feel certain that we shall have grave difficulties in the future. We must not lose sight of the fact that, even in case of a satisfactory settlement of the question of citizenship, resulting in many of our subjects becoming citizens of the Republic, the number of those remaining British subjects will still be large. We have no most favoured nation treaty with the South African Republic, nor does any clause of the Convention give our subjects expressly all the rights which are possessed by subjects of some other Powers under treaties. Yet it is absolutely inconsistent with the special relationship which we have always asserted to exist between Great Britain and the South African Republic that a British subject should be, in any respect, at a disadvantage in the Transvaal compared with the subject of any other Power. The Government of the South African Republic deny that special relationship, therefore, in the absence of a treaty or of a distinct understanding equally binding, it will remain possible for such an anomaly to occur.

The settlement of other questions of difference, concurrently with that of the political rights of the Uitlanders, is of great importance in its bearing on the probable success of the measures for admitting Uitlanders to citizenship. As long as grave differences exist, which are calculated to embroil Her Majesty's Government with the South African Republic, British Uitlanders will hesitate to become citizens of the latter State, for fear of finding themselves shortly in the painful position of having to take up arms against their old country.

It is, to my mind, one of the most objectionable features of the reply of the South African Republic to the latest proposal of Her Majesty's Government that it absolutely makes no reference to the existence of any questions other than those of citizenship and arbitration. The Government of the South African Republic can certainly not claim that this position is in harmony with the line taken up by me during the Conference at Bloemfontein, even if no regard were paid to the words used by me at the close of it: 'There are subjects with regard to which Her Majesty's Government clearly cannot arbitrate'—'this Conference is absolutely at an end, and there is no obligation on either side arising out of it.' The fact of our arriving at an agreement, if we should arrive at one, with regard to the one question discussed at Bloemfontein, cannot possibly be held to preclude the discussion of other questions, to the existence of which I repeatedly referred, or to justify a demand for the submission of all of them to arbitration.

Moreover, Her Majesty's Government, in its latest proposal, clearly indicated that, assuming the matter of political representation to be out

of the way, other questions, including arbitration, would remain to be considered. It may appear to the Government of the South African Republic to be in their interest, though I do not believe it is, to rush through another hastily-framed franchise scheme, and claim, on account of its superficial conformity with my Bloemfontein suggestions, that it should be regarded as completely and finally disposing of all the demands of Her Majesty's Government, exclusive of such as may be referred to arbitration. But I do not think that, if the matter is seriously considered, this claim will be regarded as tenable.

How far the Colonial Secretary was prepared to go along the road of conciliation and compromise is made manifest by his offer on September 9, 1899, to accept so much of the counter-proposals of the Transvaal as was contained in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of the communication from Mr. Reitz of August 19. They were as follows:

(1) The (Transvaal) Government are willing to recommend to the Volksraad and the people a five years' retrospective franchise, as proposed by His Excellency the High Commissioner on the 1st June, 1899. (2) The Government are further willing to recommend to the Volksraad that eight new seats in the First Volksraad, and, if necessary, also in the Second Volksraad, be given to the population of the Witwatersrand, thus, with the two sitting members for the gold-fields, giving to the population thereof ten representatives in a Raad of thirty-six, and in future the representation of the gold-fields of this Republic shall not fall below the proportion of one-fourth of the total. (3) The new burghers shall equally with the old burghers be entitled to vote at the election for State President and Commandant-General.

In notifying the acceptance of these three points, Mr. Chamberlain said:

The acceptance of these terms by the Government of the South African Republic would at once remove the tension between the two Governments, and would in all probability render unnecessary any further intervention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to secure the redress of grievances which the Uitlanders would themselves be able to bring to the notice of the Executive and the Raad.

Her Majesty's Government are increasingly impressed with the danger of further delay in relieving the strain which has already caused so much injury to the interests of South Africa, and they earnestly press for an immediate and definite reply to their present proposal.

If it is acceded to, they will be ready to make immediate arrangements for a further Conference between the President of the South African Republic and the High Commissioner to settle all the details of the proposed Tribunal of Arbitration, and the questions referred to in the note of the 30th August[1] which are neither Uitlander grievances nor questions of interpretation, but which might be readily settled by friendly communications between the representatives of the two Governments.

If, however, as they most earnestly hope will not be the case, the

[1] Such, for instance, as the rectification of the Zulu borders, etc.

reply of the South African Republic Government is negative or inconclusive, Her Majesty's Government must reserve to themselves the right to reconsider the situation *de novo*, and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement.

These proposals which Mr. Chamberlain was prepared to accept were clogged by conditions which were obviously inadmissible. For instance, Mr. Reitz says :[1]

In putting forward the above proposals, the Government of South African Republic assumes (*a*) that Her Majesty's Government will agree that the present intervention shall not form a precedent for future similar action, and that in the future no interference in the internal affairs of the Republic will take place ; (*b*) that Her Majesty's Government will not further insist on the assertion of the suzerainty, the controversy on this subject being allowed tacitly to drop.

And in order to emphasize the dependence of the franchise proposals upon the other conditions mentioned above, Mr. Reitz telegraphed two days later as follows :

In continuation of my despatch of 19th inst., and with reference to the communication to you of the State Attorney this morning, I wish to forward to you the following in explanation thereof, with the request that the same may be telegraphed to His Excellency the High Commissioner for South Africa, as forming part of the proposals of this Government embodied in the above-named despatch. The proposals of this Government regarding question of franchise and representation contained in that despatch must be regarded as expressly conditional on Her Majesty's Government consenting to the points set forth in Paragraph 5 of the despatch, viz.: (*a*) In future not to interfere in internal affairs of the South African Republic ; (*b*) not to insist further on its assertion of existence of suzerainty ; (*c*) to agree to arbitration.

From these despatches it is made evident that in every advance on the part of the South African Republic was provided a means of escape from the obligations which it apparently was willing to contract. From beginning to end, as Sir Henry de Villiers pointed out, the policy of the Transvaal could only be described as one of 'wriggling.' What was wanted, as was pointed out over and over again at the Bloemfontein Conference and in the innumerable despatches which passed between the two Governments during the months of July, August, and September, was such an immediate relief of the more pressing grievances of the Uitlanders as would allay the feverish unrest which with each succeeding delay threatened more seriously the

[1] Blue-book, C. 9521, p. 46.

peace and tranquillity of South Africa. This remedy the Transvaal Government refused to apply until the very end. Meanwhile they were preparing for war. As early as August 13, 1899, Lord Milner felt constrained to call the attention of the Imperial Government to the measures which were being adopted in the Volksraad. The following passage from his telegram is interesting from more points of view than one. We have heard many complaints of the alleged arming of natives by British military authorities. These statements have been categorically denied by Lord Kitchener, and it may not be out of place to remark here that the arming of the natives in the Transkei for purposes of self-defence was the result of an order given, not by the military authorities or by an enemy of the Transvaal in Cape Colony, but by so stout a champion of the Boers as Mr. John X. Merriman. The sincerity of these Boer protests may be understood from the passage I am about to quote:

> I desire (said Lord Milner)[1] to call your attention to the unsatisfactory position in which this question of commandeering now stands. As reported in my despatches of 15th inst. and of 29th inst., the Volksraad have passed a number of clauses of a new Grondwet, which is likely to come into force immediately. Of these clauses, Article 74 declares that 'in case of war, rebellion, or other causes of grave danger, the State President may, in consultation with the Commandant-General, and with the consent of the Executive Council, have martial law proclaimed, and *every inhabitant without distinction*[2] is then compelled to lend aid in defence of the State.' Article 109 provides that 'the law can also compel inhabitants who are not burghers and coloured people to co-operate for the maintenance of the independence of the Republic, for the defence of its territory, and for the suppression of rebellions and disturbances.' By Article 20: 'Where in the Grondwet the regulation of a matter is left to the law, then therein will also be considered a Raad Besluit,' from which it appears that a resolution of the Volksraad can at any moment give effect to Article 109.

Besides the distinct authorization to employ natives in a war between whites, the clauses of the new Grondwet assumed the right, unknown to civilized nations, of commandeering the subjects of the Government with which the Transvaal was, or might be, at war to fight against their own Sovereign.

On September 16 a despatch was received from State Secretary Reitz, in which he reiterates the assertion that

[1] Blue-book, C. 9530, p. 2. [2] The italics are mine.

his Government will consent to no concessions unless the conditions accompanying them were also recognised by Her Majesty's Government. At this moment, when the cordial support of the Cape Ministry to the very moderate proposals made by the Imperial Government might have averted war, and when a frank avowal of neutrality by the Orange Free State would have certainly prevented that catastrophe, neither of these important factors in the problem would help the Imperial Government. Lord Milner telegraphed on September 19 to the President of the Orange Free State, acquainting him with the despatch of detachments to secure the line of communication between the colony and the British territories lying to the north of it, a portion of which would necessarily be stationed near the borders of the Orange Free State, and in communicating this information to President Steyn, Lord Milner said :[1]

I take this opportunity of making a general statement of the attitude of Her Majesty's Government at the present juncture, which, in view of the many current misapprehensions on the subject, Her Majesty's Government have authorized me to convey to your Honour.

Her Majesty's Government still hope for a peaceful settlement with the Government of the South African Republic. Should this hope, however, unfortunately be disappointed, they look to the Government of the Orange Free State to preserve strict neutrality, and to prevent any military intervention by any of its citizens. They are prepared to give formal assurance that in that case the integrity of the territory of the Orange Free State will under all circumstances be strictly respected. There is, as far as Her Majesty's Government are aware, absolutely no cause to justify any disturbance of the friendly relations between Great Britain and the Orange Free State. It is entirely untrue that Her Majesty's Government desire to impair the independence of the Orange Free State, towards which Republic they are animated by the most friendly sentiments.

To this President Steyn coldly replied :

Whilst this Government[2] will continue to do all in their power to allay excitement, I cannot help impressing upon your Excellency the fact that if the proposed course be pursued, following as it will on other military preparations near our border, it will not improbably be considered by our burghers as a menace to this State, and will (?) in any case naturally create a very strong feeling of distrust and unrest among them. If unwished-for developments should arise therefrom, the responsibility will not rest with this Government.

I will submit your Excellency's telegram to the Volksraad early in its Session, which opens on Thursday next, and meanwhile beg to assure

[1] Blue-book, C. 9530, p. 14

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

your Excellency that this Government would view with deep regret any disturbance of those friendly relations which have hitherto existed between Great Britain and this State.

Considering the nature of Lord Milner's communication, this veiled menace of a State with which we had no quarrel, or grounds for quarrel, is proof enough—if proof were required—of the determination of the Afrikanders wherever they were found to act in concert against the paramount Power; nor was Her Majesty's Ministry in the Cape Colony any more helpful. They forwarded on September 21 a Minute to the High Commissioner for transmission to the Imperial Government:

Ministers unanimously beg Her Majesty's Government to believe that their best efforts have been spent in endeavouring to aid in securing a peaceful and satisfactory settlement of the Transvaal crisis, and to weigh well their earnest conviction that the situation is now one in which great efforts should be made, by the exercise of a spirit of magnanimous compromise, to avert the calamity which seriously threatens the British provinces in South Africa, and not only the Republics.[1] It is not open to doubt that the issue of a war could only be a victory for the Imperial arms, but the evil consequences of the perhaps prolonged struggle which would take place would be far-reaching and abiding for generations, and would affect alike the European and the native populations.

They desire me to add that this message is an indication that they are deeply persuaded that the main—they fear the only—hope of avoiding such a calamity is a large measure of consideration shown by Her Majesty's Government at the present juncture—a consideration which would not only not impair, but truly strengthen, the foundations of the Empire in South Africa.

In this Minute we find a confirmation of the danger foreseen and expressed by Lord Milner in his Graaf Reinet speech, that whenever difficulties rose between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic, the whole weight of Afrikander influence was thrown, without reflection, into the scale in favour of the Transvaal. The crisis to which the Minute refers was not provoked by any acts, or even threats, of aggression on the part of the Imperial Government. They and the subjects of the Crown were the aggrieved parties. The grievances under which the Uitlanders groaned were gross and palpable, and were such as would have necessitated the intervention of any civilized Government in any

[1] It is worth while noticing that this reference to the 'Republics' implies a foreknowledge of the intentions of the Orange Free State, which before and after was repudiated by Mr. Schreiner.

part of the world. Yet it was for the authors of these grievances, and not the victims of them, that a Cape Ministry owing allegiance to the Crown appealed for a large measure of consideration. From this time forth to the end, which was very near, the President of the Orange Free State began to show his hand more clearly. He forwarded to the High Commissioner a despatch on September 27 which, while intrinsically important, has the additional interest of having been made the basis of a charge against Lord Milner of garbling despatches. The charge is so grotesque that it would hardly deserve notice except for the ignoble use to which it has been put.

To show the flimsiness of the allegation, I will give what Mr. J. A. Hobson calls the mutilated despatch of President Steyn, with the portion omitted by Sir Alfred Milner printed in italics exactly as Mr. Hobson prints them.[1] Lord Milner had prefaced the despatch containing Mr. Steyn's communication with these words :

27th of September. No. 4. In continuation of my telegram of to-day, No. 3, Orange Free State President has telegraphed to me at enormous length. After recapitulating the history of negotiations from their point of view, he continues :

And now we will go on with Mr. Hobson :

This Government are still prepared and tender their services to further the interests of peace, and to continue in their endeavours to procure a satisfactory solution of existing difficulties on fair and reasonable lines. They feel themselves, however, hampered now as in the past (*a*) by a want of knowledge as to the definite object and extent of the desires and demands of the British Government, compliance with which that Government consider themselves entitled to insist on, and as to the grounds on which such insistence is based; (*b*) by the fact, notwithstanding the repeated assurances of the British Government that it does not wish to interfere in the internal affairs of the government of the South African Republic nor to disturb its independence, it has pursued a policy which seems to justify a contrary conclusion. To give but one instance, *which could not be otherwise than calculated to be a most disturbing element in the conduct of negotiations*, I may mention the enormous and ever-increasing military preparations on the part of the British Government, indicating a policy of force and coercion, *during the whole course of negotiations which were stated to be of a friendly and conciliatory nature; those preparations, in the absence of any apparent cause justifying the same, being not unnaturally looked upon as a direct menace to the South African Republic, after all that has been done by the South African*

[1] 'The War in South Africa,' p. 184.

Republic to meet the views of Her Majesty's Government for a Joint Commission to inquire into the scope and effect of those measures, and whether immediate and substantial representation would thereby be assured to the Outlanders willing to avail themselves of the provisions thereof.

This Government cannot conceive it possible that the points of difference that may exist on this subject justify those extensive and ever-increasing military preparations being carried out on this border, not only of the South African Republic, but also of the Orange Free State, and they are therefore reluctantly compelled to conclude that they must be intended to secure other objects at present unknown to the Government of this State, and the knowledge whereof, if they prove to be fair and reasonable, might induce this Government to make necessary representations to secure their attainment, and enable them to continue their efforts to secure a speedy, peaceful, and satisfactory settlement of the difficulties and differences existing between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic. *I beg to add that I am firmly convinced and feel sure that any reasonable assurance could be obtained.* 'We are firmly convinced—the repetition is due to an alteration of Sir Alfred Milner's—that the Government of the South African Republic has been sincerely desirous to maintain in its integrity the Convention of London, 1884, both as regards its letter and its spirit, and that they do not contemplate or assert a claim to any absolute political status without the qualification arising out of Article IV. of that Convention. *And accordingly it does not appear to me that there is any misunderstanding hereon that could not promptly and without difficulty be settled.* I feel assured that there is no difference between their contention on that point and the communication made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government by Her Majesty's High Commissioner to the Governments both of the South African Republic and of this State on February 27, 1884, as to the import of that Convention; that communication was as follows: 'Same complete internal independence in Transvaal as in Orange Free State; conduct and control intercourse with foreign Governments conceded; Queen's final approval treaties reserved.'

In the expectation that Her Majesty's Government will share my views that no effort should be spared to effect a peaceable settlement *if possible of the points in difference between them and the South African Republic, and that consequently all causes of irritation likely to delay or prevent such settlement should be removed, or at least not be aggravated,* I trust that Her Majesty's Government may see their way clear, pending arrival of the further despatch intimated as about to be sent to the Government of the South African Republic, and pending further negotiations, to stop any further movements or increase of troops on or near the borders of the South African Republic and of this State, and, further, to give an assurance to that effect to allay the great excitement and irritation naturally aroused and increased thereby; and if Her Majesty's Government should be pleased to accede to this request, this Government would be glad to be favoured with the views of Her Majesty's Government on the points raised herein, and more particularly as to the precise nature and scope of the concessions or measures the adoption whereof Her Majesty's Government consider themselves entitled to claim, or which they suggest as being necessary or sufficient to insure a satisfactory and permanent solution of existing differences between them and the South African Republic, whilst at the same time providing a means for settlement [of] any other that may arise in the future.

M. T. STEYN, *States-President.*

Now, it must be obvious to any intelligent person that not a single material fact was omitted by Lord Milner in his condensation of the telegram of President Steyn. What he did leave out was a mass of impertinent comments on the motives of Her Majesty's Government and of Steyn's personal opinions thereon. The reader has only to ask himself the simple question, Whether, if any of the italicized passages in the above despatch had been forwarded to Mr. Chamberlain, they would have had the slightest influence imaginable upon the progress of events? That is the answer to the charge of garbling. The explanation of the cause which rendered such a charge possible is amusing. I happened to show the pages of Mr. Hobson's book which contained these allegations to Lord Milner. 'That,' he said laughingly, as he read it, 'is the last remnant of my Treasury training. It might have been wiser from my own point of view to have given the whole despatch verbatim, but I could not bring myself to impose a charge of many hundreds of pounds upon the British tax-payer for the mere purpose of telegraphing all the wearisome repetitions and redundancies of President Steyn's involved eloquence. I collated my despatch with the President's telegram more than once to assure myself that I had omitted nothing which was material to the issue, and Mr. Hobson has done me service in enabling my critics to perform the same operation for themselves.' Of the despatch itself, one is puzzled to say whether its ignorance or its impertinence is the more striking characteristic. Its ignorance is displayed by the lack of any clear apprehension of the circumstances in which the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 were effected. Its impertinence may be said to manifest itself in every line, but particularly in the assumption that President Steyn is better qualified to interpret the spirit and letter of these Conventions to which he was no party, and which did not concern him or his State, than Her Majesty's Ministers. Impertinence degenerates into impudence when the President of a State with which the Queen's Government had no quarrel or cause of quarrel 'trusts that Her Majesty's Government may see their way clear, pending arrival of the further despatch intimated about to be sent to the Government of the South African Republic, and pend-

ing further negotiations, to stop any further movements or increase of troops on or near the borders of the South African Republic and of this State, and, further, to give an assurance to that effect to allay the great excitement and irritation naturally aroused and increased thereby.'

On reading this insolent communication, it is only possible to gasp and say 'Prodigious!'

By the beginning of October it was manifest that a rupture between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic could not be averted except by concessions on the part of the Transvaal Executive, which they were obviously disinclined to grant. Mr. Chamberlain had notified the Republic that after the failure of previous negotiations Her Majesty's Government would 'clean the slate,' to use a now classical expression, and would set forth in a formal despatch the final opinions of the Government. On the first of the month Mr. Reitz asked the British Agent at Pretoria to telegraph to the High Commissioner the following message:

State Secretary will be much obliged if he might be informed by Monday what decision, if any, the British Cabinet have taken.

To which an immediate reply was sent by Mr. Chamberlain:

The despatch of Her Majesty's Government is being prepared; it will be some days before it is ready.

As procrastination had been the unbroken rule of the Transvaal Government in all its dealings with the High Commissioner, they could hardly have been astonished that Her Majesty's Government took its time in formulating a despatch which must involve the most serious consequences. On the 2nd of the month President Steyn, who had received the most formal assurances from the High Commissioner that in no case would British troops violate the neutrality of the Orange Free State so long as that neutrality was observed, telegraphed to him as follows:[1]

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have deemed it advisable, in order to allay the intense excitement and unrest amongst our burghers arising from the totally undefended state of our border in the

[1] C. 9530, p. 42.

presence of a continued increase and movement of troops on two sides of this State, to call up our burghers to satisfy them that due precaution has been taken in regard to guarding our borders, and to insure their not acting independently of proper control. I am still strongly and sincerely desirous of seeing, and if possible aiding in, a friendly settlement of the differences between Her Majesty's Government and South African Republic being arrived at. I am still looking forward soon to be favoured with the views of Her Majesty's Government on the points touched upon in my telegraphic despatch to your Excellency of the 27th instant.[1]

It may be remarked in passing that one of the chief causes alleged for the ultimatum soon to follow was the massing of the very inadequate forces which Her Majesty possessed in South Africa strictly within her own borders. And yet we have in President Steyn's telegram an admission that a friendly State with which we had no quarrel, and which had received the most solemn assurances of inviolability, was massing its troops upon the border 'in order to allay the intense excitement and unrest among the burghers.' To this intimation Lord Milner replied at once :[2]

I have the honour to acknowledge your Honour's telegram of to-day, the terms of which I am communicating to Her Majesty's Government. With regard to the movements of troops to which you refer, I can only repeat the assurances given in my telegrams of the 19th and 25th September. I regret that your Honour should have felt obliged to call up a large body of burghers and to place them immediately on our borders, whereas no Imperial troops have been so placed on the borders of the Orange Free State, except the small detachment in the defence of Kimberley ; but as your Honour has seen fit to take this course, I am glad to have your Honour's assurance that your forces will be held in proper control. As your Honour is aware, the Government of the South African Republic has mobilized and placed on the borders of Natal a very considerable army, and made dispositions which, unwilling as I am to believe such action possible, seems to indicate an invasion of the Queen's dominions. In view of the repeated declarations of your Honour, I feel confident that an invasion of Her Majesty's territories by South African Republic would not have countenance and support of your Honour's Government, all the more so as your Honour continues to express the hope of a peaceful settlement, of which I likewise do not despair.

The next day Mr. Steyn showed his hand more openly. He met Lord Milner's conciliatory telegram which I have just quoted as follows :

I cannot help regretfully expressing my conviction that the action of the Transvaal in putting burghers on their borders is only the natural result, all along feared by me, of the constant increase of British troops

[1] The so-called garbled despatch given above. [2] C. 9530, p. 43.

and their movement in the direction of Transvaal border. At the same time I have no reason to anticipate any immediate aggressive action on the part of Transvaal, unless further forward movements of British troops should indicate intention of attack upon Transvaal. I beg to urge upon your Excellency the necessity of trying both to explain the reply to my telegraphic despatch and to prevent further movements of troops.

Lord Milner answered in these words :

Your Honour must be perfectly well aware that all the movements of British troops which have taken place in this country since the beginning of present troubles, which have been necessitated by the natural alarm of the inhabitants in exposed districts, are not comparable in magnitude with the massing of armed forces by Government of South African Republic on the borders of Natal. I do not suggest that your Honour is in any way responsible for that action, which appears to me inconsistent with tone of your Honour's telegrams of 22nd September, in which you expressed your conviction that a peaceful settlement of difficulties was still possible and ought to be arrived at.

I may here interpolate a personal testimony. Early in the month of August a letter was placed in my hands from an English farmer settled within a few miles of the northern mouth of the Laing's Nek tunnel. In it he stated that a strong commando of burghers had been established near to his own farm in a secluded spot, a fact which he had only learnt by the merest accident, but of which he satisfied himself by a personal visit. He found that General Joubert had inspected it on more than one occasion, and that it was ready at a moment's notice to seize upon the mouth of the tunnel. I communicated the contents of this letter to the proper quarters, but did not at that time attach sufficient importance to it to preserve it. On the very day on which President Steyn had expressed an opinion that there was 'no reason to anticipate any immediate aggressive action on the part of the Transvaal,' Lord Milner telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain :

The situation is growing steadily worse. The Orange Free State is expelling British subjects and has closed its borders ; practically the whole body of burghers is being commandeered. There is now a very large number of refugees in the colony.

And yet Mr. Steyn was still keeping up the delusion of friendly neutrality. He telegraphed on October 4 :

I feel deeply impressed with the danger of delay and with the urgent need of immediate action being taken if any further attempts are to be made to secure a peaceful solution.

Lord Milner replied on the same day :[1]

I have the honour to acknowledge your Honour's long telegram of yesterday afternoon, the substance of which I have communicated by telegraph to Her Majesty's Government. There is, I think, a conclusive reply to your Honour's accusation against the policy of Her Majesty's Government, but no good purpose would be served by recrimination. The present position is that burgher forces are assembled in very large numbers in immediate proximity to the frontiers of Natal, while the British troops occupy certain defensive positions well within those borders. The question is whether the burgher forces will invade British territory, thus closing the door to any possibility of a pacific solution. I cannot believe that the South African Republic will make (take?) such aggressive action, or that your Honour would countenance such course, which there is nothing to justify. Prolonged negotiations have hitherto failed to bring about a satisfactory understanding, and no doubt such understanding is more difficult than ever to-day, after expulsion of British subjects with great loss and suffering ; but till the threatened act of aggression is committed I shall not despair of peace, and I feel sure that any reasonable proposal, from whatever quarter proceeding, would be favourably considered by Her Majesty's Government if it offered an immediate termination of present tension and a prospect of permanent tranquillity.

Those who contend that the war which ensued was deliberately forced upon the Republics by Her Majesty's Government and their representative, the High Commissioner, will have to explain away the last paragraph of the above telegram. They will have to ask themselves if there is any civilized Power in the world which would not have regarded the expulsion of its subjects from the territories of another Power as a formal *casus belli*. Yet even under this provocation, which would have been tolerated by no other country but Great Britain, Lord Milner was still trying to keep open the door which the Presidents of both Republics were slamming insolently in his face. There was, indeed, one proposal made by President Steyn on October 4, which for grotesque impertinence it would be difficult to match in the history of diplomatic negotiations :

Above all (he said[2]) do I consider it would not be practicable to induce Government of South African Republic to make or entertain proposals or suggestions, unless not only the troops menacing their State are withdrawn farther from their borders, but an assurance be given by Her Majesty's Government that all further despatch and increase of troops will at once and during negotiations be stopped, and that those now on the water should either not be landed, or at least should remain as far removed as can be from the scene of possible hostilities.

[1] C. 9530, p. 47. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

And, with a touch of humour which is not apparent in other productions of Mr. Steyn, he adds:

> I trust your Excellency will agree with me that these suggestions are only reasonable, as it would be manifestly unfair, should further negotiations prove abortive—a result which I would earnestly endeavour to prevent, and which, I trust, need not be anticipated—that the forces of South African Republic (? should be) in a worse position or at a greater disadvantage than they are at present.

President Steyn was, as events have too completely shown, in a far better position to judge of the effective strength of the two Republics, either for aggression or for defence, than was Her Majesty's Government. The course of the war proved to demonstration that Her Majesty's forces then in South Africa or on the way thither were insufficient even for the defence of the two British colonies against invasion. And yet the President of a neutral State, with unsuspected humour, demands that the weaker force should be withdrawn, while the stronger is allowed to occupy every point of vantage. Even then the patience of Her Majesty's Government was not exhausted. On October 6 Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to the High Commissioner to inform President Steyn that

> if the latter can obtain the needful assurance to safeguard against any act of invasion or hostility against any portion of Her Majesty's colonies or territories pending negotiations of which he speaks, you will advise Her Majesty's Government to give an assurance in the same terms, *mutatis mutandis*. This will place both parties in exactly the same position. Each will be free to do what they like in their own territories, but neither will be able to trespass on the territories of the other.[1]

President Steyn's answer to this most reasonable request was given on the following day:

> I am earnestly desirous (he says[2]) of meeting any reasonable suggestions that may tend to a continuance of friendly negotiations, and to avert an issue for which, as I have frequently stated, I see no justification whatever. I trust that your Excellency will, on reconsideration, see that Government of South African Republic, in only taking proper precautions for the future, might fairly decline, and I do not feel I could be expected to ask them to continue negotiations in the face of the fact that from all sides of Her Majesty's dominion troops are being poured into South Africa with the avowed object of coercing South African Republic into accepting whatever terms Her Majesty's Government might decide to impose. I have no doubt, in so far as Her Majesty's troops are intended for defence of Her Majesty's possessions, the same purpose—viz., fully safeguarding

[1] C. 9530, p. 48. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

those possessions from invasion and subjects from molestation—could be effected. I would be willing to assist in its being effected without (?) one side finding itself put at any great disadvantage during and because of further negotiations. The assurance asked for by your Excellency could, I have no doubt, be obtained and satisfactorily arranged; but the point that I think it fair to urge is that they would be taken by South African Republic as virtually amounting to an act of hostility on the part of Her Majesty's Government to be continuously and extensively increasing its forces (?) during negotiations, when all need for defensive measures can, as I firmly believe, be fully obviated without such increase.

The events of the war, which have given full occupation to a quarter of a million of Her Majesty's troops for a space of more than two years, is in itself a sufficient commentary upon the above preposterous proposal. It has been a commonplace of pro-Boer criticism to urge that if Mr. Chamberlain's final despatch, embodying the last proposals of Her Majesty's Government, had been forwarded before the ultimatum, war might still have been averted. This delusion must surely be dispelled by the last telegram received from President Steyn. On October 9, the day before the despatch of the ultimatum, Lord Milner informed Mr. Chamberlain that he had[1]

received another lengthy telegram from President Orange Free State. Substance as follows:

As regards reply of Her Majesty's Government to telegram of 27th September, he expresses regret that Her Majesty's Government has not given assurance as to cessation of further movement or increase of troops pending negotiations.

He demurs to statement that military preparations of Her Majesty's Government have been necessitated by conversion of South African Republic into an armed camp. Her Majesty's Government must be entirely misinformed, and it would be regrettable if, through such misunderstanding, present state of extreme tension were allowed to continue.

Though Her Majesty's Government may regard precautions taken by South African Republic after Jameson Raid as excessive, Government of South African Republic cannot be blamed for adopting them, in view of large Uitlander population constantly being stirred up through hostile press to treason and rebellion by persons and organizations financially or politically interested in overthrowing the Government.[2]

Arming of burghers not intended for any purpose of aggression against Her Majesty's dominions.[3] People of South African Republic have, since shortly after Jameson Raid, been practically as fully armed as now, yet have never committed any act of aggression.

[1] C. 9530, p. 64.

[2] That is to say, that the Government of the South African Republic was justified in importing many millions of cartridges, hundreds of thousands of rifles, and the latest guns from French and German factories, to withstand a possible outbreak of Uitlanders, who were utterly defenceless and unarmed.

[3] This was followed within a week by invasion of both colonies.

It was not till Her Majesty's Government, with evident intention of enforcing their views on South African Republic in purely internal matters, had greatly augmented their forces and moved them nearer to borders that a single burgher was called up for the purpose, as he firmly believed, of defending country and independence.[1]

If this natural assumption erroneous, not too late to rectify misunderstanding by mutual agreement to withdraw forces on both sides and undertaking by Her Majesty's Government to stop further increase of troops. Without this, futile to attempt to make or obtain suggestion or proposals for solution of differences which are not of a nature to justify employment of force except on assumption of inauguration of a policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government which he would be most reluctant to adopt.

As regards Orange Free State placing itself on war footing, that State has everything to lose and nothing to gain by being embroiled, and would not have called up its burghers, nor would it have cheerfully and unanimously responded to call, but for conviction that presence of British troops on borders of both Republics was menace to both, and attack upon independence of South African Republic, which Orange Free State was bound to defend, protestations to the contrary appearing inconsistent with action of Her Majesty's Government.

The date of this telegram, it will be observed, was October 9. On the self-same day Mr. Conyngham Green received from the Government of the South African Republic the note bearing date 'to-day,' of which the following is the text :[2]

The Government of the South African Republic feels itself compelled to refer the Government of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland once more to the Convention of London, 1884, concluded between this Republic and the United Kingdom, and which (? in) its XIVth Article secures certain specified rights to the white population of this Republic, namely, that 'All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (*a*) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic ; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises ; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce, either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ ; (*d*) they will not be subject, in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic.' This Government wishes further to observe that the above are only rights which Her Majesty's Government have reserved in the above Convention with regard to the Uitlander population of this Republic, and that the violation only of those rights could give that Government a right to diplomatic representations or intervention, while, moreover, the regulation of all other questions affecting the position or the rights of the Uitlander population under the above-mentioned Convention is handed over to the Government and the representatives of the people of the South African Republic. Amongst the questions, the regulation of which falls exclusively within

[1] There were in all about 12,000 British troops at this time in the colony.
[2] C. 9530, p. 65.

the competence of the Government and of the Volksraad, are included those of the franchise and representation of the people in this Republic, and although thus the exclusive right of this Government and of the Volksraad for the regulation of that franchise and representation is indisputable, yet this Government has found occasion to discuss in a friendly fashion the franchise and the representation of the people with Her Majesty's Government, without, however, recognising any right thereto on the part of Her Majesty's Government. This Government has also, by the formulation of the now existing Franchise Law and the Resolution with regard to representation, constantly held these friendly discussions before its eyes. On the part of Her Majesty's Government, however, the friendly nature of these discussions has assumed a more and more threatening tone, and the minds of the people in this Republic and in the whole of South Africa have been excited, and a condition of extreme tension has been created, while Her Majesty's Government could no longer agree to the legislation respecting franchise and the Resolution respecting representation in this Republic, and finally, by your note of 25th September, 1899, broke off all friendly correspondence on the subject, and intimated that they must now proceed to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement, and this Government can only see in the above intimation from Her Majesty's Government a new violation of the Convention of London, 1884, which does not reserve to Her Majesty's Government the right to a unilateral settlement of a question which is exclusively a domestic one for this Government, and has already been regulated by it.

On account of the strained situation, and the consequent serious loss in, and interruption of, trade in general which the correspondence respecting the franchise and representation in this Republic carried in its train, Her Majesty's Government have recently pressed for an early settlement, and finally pressed, by your intervention, for an answer within forty-eight hours (subsequently somewhat modified) to your note of the 12th September, replied to by the note of this Government of the 15th September, and your note of the 25th September, 1899, and thereafter further friendly negotiations broke off, and this Government received the intimation that the proposal for a final settlement would shortly be made, but although this promise was once more repeated no proposal has up to now reached this Government. Even while friendly correspondence was still going on, an increase of troops on a large scale was introduced by Her Majesty's Government and stationed in the neighbourhood of the borders of this Republic. Having regard to occurrences in the history of this Republic, which it is unnecessary here to call to mind, this Government felt obliged to regard this military force in the neighbourhood of its borders as a threat against the independence of the South African Republic, since it was aware of no circumstances which could justify the presence of such military force in South Africa and in the neighbourhood of its borders. In answer to an inquiry with respect thereto, addressed to His Excellency the High Commissioner, this Government received, to its great astonishment, in answer, a veiled insinuation that from the side of the Republic (van Republikeinsche zyde) an attack was being made on Her Majesty's colonies, and at the same time a mysterious reference to possibilities whereby it was strengthened in its suspicion that the independence of this Republic was being threatened. As a defensive measure it was therefore obliged to send a portion of the burghers of this Republic in order to offer the requisite resistance to similar possibilities. Her Majesty's unlawful intervention in the internal affairs of this Republic in conflict with the Convention of London, 1884, caused by the extraordinary

strengthening of troops in the neighbourhood of the borders of this Republic, has thus caused an intolerable condition of things to arise, whereto this Government feels itself obliged in the interest, not only of this Republic, but also (?) of all South Africa, to make an end as soon as possible, and feels itself called upon and obliged to press earnestly and with emphasis for an immediate termination of this state of things, and to request Her Majesty's Government to give it the assurance—

(*a*) That all points of mutual difference shall be regulated by the friendly course of arbitration, or by whatever amicable way may be agreed upon by this Government with Her Majesty's Government.

(*b*) That the troops on the borders of this Republic shall be instantly withdrawn.

(*c*) That all reinforcements of troops which have arrived in South Africa since the 1st June, 1899, shall be removed from South Africa within a reasonable time, to be agreed upon with this Government, and with a mutual assurance and guarantee on the part of this Government that no attack upon or hostilities against any portion of the possessions of the British Government shall be made by the Republic during further negotiations within a period of time to be subsequently agreed upon between the Governments, and this Government will, on compliance therewith, be prepared to withdraw the armed burghers of this Republic from the borders.

(*d*) That Her Majesty's troops which are now on the high seas shall not be landed in any port of South Africa.

This Government must press for an immediate and affirmative answer to these four questions, and earnestly requests Her Majesty's Government to return such an answer before or upon Wednesday, the 11th October, 1899, not later than five o'clock p.m., and it desires further to add that in the event of unexpectedly no satisfactory answer being received by it within that interval, (it) will with great regret be compelled to regard the action of Her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war, and will not hold itself responsible for the consequences thereof, and that in the event of any further movements of troops taking place within the above-mentioned time in the nearer directions of our borders this Government will be compelled to regard that also as a formal declaration of war.

To this ultimatum there could, of course, be no other answer than that of taking up the glove so insolently thrown down. President Steyn, immediately after the declaration of war, issued a proclamation to his people which cuts the ground from under the feet of those who still maintain that the rupture was due either to the unreasonable demands of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner for a more liberal franchise in South Africa or to the Jameson Raid. The following proclamation appeared in the *South African News* of October 12, 1899, 'by the courtesy of *Ons Land*.'[1] It ran as follows :[2]

[1] The *South African News* was the organ of Messrs. Sauer and Merriman, and *Ons Land* was owned and controlled by Mr. Hofmeyr.

[2] Blue-book, Cd. 43, p. 139.

An occasion which we would gladly have avoided, a time when we as a people are compelled to defend ourselves with weapons against injustice and a disgraceful use of force, has at length arrived, when our sister Republic on the north of the Vaal River is about to be attacked by an unscrupulous enemy, who has for several years already prepared himself, and has looked for a pretext for the violence of which he now makes himself guilty, the purpose whereof is to annihilate the Afrikander people.[1] We are not only bound to our sister Republic by the ties of blood, by partaking of mutual interests, but also by the formal treaty (necessitated by circumstances) entered into with the object of assisting her, if the Transvaal should be unrighteously attacked, a circumstance which we for a long time past had reason to expect would occur. We cannot, therefore, possibly see injustice done to her and see our own dearly-bought freedom placed in jeopardy, but we are called upon as men to resist this. Trusting in the Almighty, in full confidence that He will never permit unrighteousness and injustice to triumph, and trusting to our just right in the eyes of Him and the whole world, we thus resist the powerful enemy, with whom we have always been desirous of continuing to live righteously and in friendship in order to combat wrong and injustice done to us by his instrumentality in the past.[2] We declare solemnly, and as if in the presence of the Almighty, that we are compelled to take this course through the injustice done to our kith and kin, being well aware that when their independence ceases our own existence as an independent nation will be meaningless, and that their fate, if they have to bow beneath an overwhelming Power, will also overtake us at no distant date. Solemn obligations have not protected our sister Republic against annexation, against conspiracy, against laying claim to a suzerainty that is non-existent, against continual oppression and interference, and now against a fresh attack, which has no other object than her destruction. Our own unfortunate experiences in the past have made it also sufficiently clear to us that one can place no reliance on the most solemn promises and obligations of Great Britain when she has an administration at the helm which is prepared to tread under foot treaties, and to find hypocritical pretexts for every breach of good faith committed by her. As the unrighteous and unlawful British intervention, when he (*sic*) had conquered a barbarian black race on our eastern borders, also the violent assumption of sovereignty over a portion of our territory where the discovery of diamonds had aroused the desire for gain (although in conflict with existing treaties).[3] The desire and intention to trample under foot our rights as an independent and sovereign people, in defiance of a solemn Convention existing between the State and Great Britain, have been more than

[1] This reference to the Afrikander people, which included the Cape Dutch as well as the burghers of the two Republics, must not be overlooked, and should be compared with President Kruger's address to the First Volksraad a week before the issue of the ultimatum, in which Mr. Kruger said: 'The circumstances were such that matters threatened war. Why? Because outside they did not want the Afrikander people to be a nation'; 'and with the remarks of the Chairman of the Raad, that now was the time for the Afrikanders to become free. Like a young man, unless they had freedom, they would not become strong. The time had come, perhaps sent by Providence, when they were to be free.' And compare also the appeal by B. J. Viljoen, given above.

[2] The *South African News* must be held responsible for the curious translation of President Steyn's proclamation.

[3] In this comprehensive indictment Mr. Steyn attacks with rigid impartiality the administrations of Mr. Gladstone (1868–1874), of Lord Beaconsfield (1874–1880), of Mr. Gladstone again (1880–1885), and of Lord Salisbury (1886 and onwards).

once, and recently, again shown by the Administration at present governing in England by giving expression in public documents to an unfounded claim to paramountcy for the whole of South Africa, and thus also over this State. With reference also to the South African Republic, Great Britain has until the present day refused to agree that she shall recover her original position with reference to foreign relations, a position which she had never forfeited by any fault on her part. The original intention of the Conventions[1] to which that Republic had agreed under pressure of circumstances has been twisted and continually used by the British Administration as a means of exercising tyranny and wrong, and, further, as a means of support of a violent propaganda in favour of Great Britain within that Republic. And while for injustice done to her on the part of the British Government no restitution such as is demanded by justice is offered, and while no gratitude is shown for the indulgences granted at the request of this Government to British subjects, who, according to the laws of this Republic, had forfeited their lives and property,[2] no feeling of shame has restrained her, after gold-mines of inestimable wealth were discovered in the country, from making claims against that Republic, the consequences whereof, if they had been acceded to, would have been that those through the exertions of whom, or whose forefathers, the country was freed from barbarism, and who had given it civilization with their blood and tears,[3] would have been deprived of that measure of control over the interest of the country to which they were in justice, according to Divine and human laws, entitled, and that the balance of power would be placed in the hands of one who, a stranger by birth, enjoyed the privilege of depriving the country of its principal treasure, while he never showed any loyalty but loyalty to a foreign Government. Besides that, the necessary result of compliance with those claims would be that the independence of the country as a self-governing, independent sovereign people would be irrevocably lost. For many years past British troops have been placed in great numbers on the borders of our sister Republic in order to compel it by terrorism to comply with claims which should be made on the same, and to excite a treasonable rising, and the crafty plans of those whose love of gold is the motive power of their shameful undertakings.[4] These plans have now reached their zenith in the public violations to which the present British Government has now proceeded. While we candidly acknowledge the honourable character of thousands of Englishmen who abhor such deeds of robbery and wrong, we cannot do otherwise than execrate the shameless breach of treaties, the hypocritical pretexts for contraventions of law, the violations of international law and justice, and the numerous wrongful deeds of the British statesmen who now threaten the South African Republic with war. On their heads be the liability for bloodshed, and may a righteous Providence bring retribution on such as deserve it.

Burghers of the Orange Free State, stand up as one man against the oppressor and the violator of right.

In carrying on the conflict which we are now compelled to undertake, let the deeds of none of you be such as to disgrace a Christian and a burgher and the Free State. Let us look forward with confidence to a successful issue of the struggle, trusting to that Higher Power without

[1] It should be noted that Mr. Steyn uses the much-disputed plural.

[2] Note that President Steyn himself lays down the proposition that by the Roman-Dutch law rebellion is punishable by 'the forfeiture of life and property.'

[3] This purple passage refers to the extermination of the native races.

[4] Apparently this refers to the few hundreds of Rhodesian and Bechuanaland police, part of whom formed the whole of Dr. Jameson's tiny band of raiders.

whose assistance human weapons avail nothing. To the God of our fathers we humbly commend the justice of our cause. May He defend the right, and may He bless our weapons! Under His banner we proceed to battle for freedom and for fatherland.

This given under my hand and the Great Seal of the Free State, this 11th day of October, 1899.

M. T. STEYN,
State President.

By a curious coincidence, the last paragraph of this appears in the Blue-book on the same page[1] with a complaint by Dr. N. Maclean, a British subject, of 'brutal and unprovoked ill-treatment of himself and other British subjects, who were travelling by train to Delagoa Bay, by a mob of Boers at Machadodorp, in the Transvaal.'

As was to be expected, Dr. Reitz, the State Secretary of the South African Republic, was not to be outdone by Mr. Steyn as a worthy fellow-pupil of Karl Borckenhagen. He, too, issued a manifesto to the Free Staters, through the medium of Mr. Blignaut, the Government Secretary at Bloemfontein. As it has been my object throughout this book to rely as much as possible upon hostile evidence, I give this precious document in full. The manifesto is as follows:[2]

P. J. BLIGNAUT, ESQ., *Government Secretary,*
Bloemfontein, Orange Free State.

HONOURED FRIEND, FREE STATERS, AND BROTHER AFRIKANDERS,

The catastrophe with which we have so long been threatened has at last overtaken us, and our country is to be bathed in blood. And why? Let the murderers, the peace and treaty breakers, who are attacking us, answer the question.[3]

With their usual unblushing effrontery they will now declare that not they, but we, are the aggressors. We the aggressors? Who is it that has answered all our attempts for a peaceful settlement with contempt, and even threats?

Who is it that for months past has been mobilizing troops on our border, from all parts of the world, to enforce their (friendly) advice?

Who is it that has for years past accused us of being oppressors and tyrants?

Who is it that, while hypocritically declaring that they did not wish to impair our independence, yet continually attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of our country? That also entrapped us, and even their own representative, in a mean and despicable manner in making certain proposals which they would be willing 'to consider on their merits,' even while they were ready, as soon as these proposals (made undeniably at their own suggestion) were formulated, to reject them as an insult to the British nation, put forward with the object of making mischief?

[1] Cd. 43, p. 140. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 190.

[3] This humorous suggestion is made after the invasion of British colonies by Transvaalers and Free Staters.

Who is it that, under the pretext of obtaining the redress of the supposed Uitlander grievances, have ranged themselves with the capitalists and rebels with the object of possessing themselves of Naboth's vineyard?

Who is it that have supported and aided that traitorous and rebellious organization, so-called the 'League,' notwithstanding the warnings of their own Acting High Commissioner, Sir William Butler, an honourable, famous, and highly respected General,[1] and of Mr. Schreiner, the Premier of the only South African colony of any standing?[2]

Who is it that openly accepted a false petition, filled with thousands of forged signatures and others obtained by fraud, without even attempting to prove any of those signatures?[3]

Who is it that not only left the instigators of the shameful Jameson Raid practically unpunished, but even condoned the Raid and allowed the prime movers, with the aid of Her Majesty's High Commissioner and Her Majesty's Colonial Secretary, to insult, defraud, and libel the Afrikander nation in every possible way, backed by all the influence which Mammon can subvert and control, to the undying disgrace of our times. Who are these people?

Is it Sir Alfred Milner, Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa?

Is it Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary?

Is it Lord Salisbury and the rest of the British Cabinet?

Is it Her Majesty the Queen of England?

Is it the British nation?

Alas! we had hoped to be able to answer the last two questions in the negative, but we cannot!

The British Cabinet, the British nation, the noble, peace-loving, and aged Sovereign, honoured and respected by us all till now, they have all either condoned the injustice which is being done to us, or they have allowed themselves to be misled by a man like Chamberlain in a manner that a just God will not allow to pass unpunished.

If nations will be punished, like individuals, for condoning an offence, as well as for committing one, then this Prime Minister, this nation, this Sovereign, will not be able to defend themselves at the bar of the Great Judge for their unrighteous and unjust deeds.

The nation that has encouraged race hatred, their Prime Minister and their anointed Queen, who have allowed such a disgrace, have made themselves equally guilty with the evil-doers, and if it should now happen in South Africa, as was the case in North America a hundred years ago, that 'Ichabod' become the password of the British Empire, on whom will the blame rest?

'If the blind lead the blind they will both fall into the pit,'[4] and we shall be able, who knows how soon? to declare of our enemies, that 'whom God wishes to destroy He will first make insane.'

The statesmen of England, the warriors, the press—ay, even the preachers—have so often declared to us and the whole world that the British Empire is a mighty empire; but we know that whoever may be mighty, the Lord our God is Almighty.

Brother Afrikanders! the great day is at hand. The God of our fathers will be with us in our struggles—the Lord, whose arm has not

[1] See above, p. 591.

[2] This, of course, is intended as an insult to Natal.

[3] The blue-books of this period teem with sworn affidavits of the genuineness of these signatures.

[4] A quotation more apposite to the position of the Orange Free State it would be difficult to find in the whole range of sacred or secular literature.

been shortened so that He cannot help those who call to Him in their time of trouble. Let us lay aside our trust in princes and raise our eyes in supplication to God, our banner. By His help we will do great deeds.

Even as the mighty Spain, with her bloodthirtsy Alva and her invincible armies, had to swallow the bitterness of defeat, so, too, will God give our enemies into our hands. Who are we, that the mighty England should send her thousands of mercenary troops against us? A young and weak nation, small in numbers and insignificant in military strength.

Tempted by the wealth of our mines, the enemy has cast about for an excuse to attack us. Let them deny that if they are able. Who in South Africa will believe them? The cry is, 'The Uitlanders in South Africa are oppressed, and they are debarred political rights.'

Only after seven long years of waiting can they obtain the longed-for franchise, and not after five years—what an unheard-of injustice!

They are eager to forget that there are thousands of the so-called oppressed ones from whom it is possible, on account of the retro-active force of the seven years' franchise law, to obtain the franchise at once—but decline to take it.

In England—that free England—the new-comer must wait twelve years before he can vote for the House of Commons.

Of the House of Lords they will prefer to say nothing, because are not the members of that body rulers by birth? but in our Republic it must be five years or—WAR!

According to their Colonial Secretary, England has constituted herself champion of all the Uitlanders. And what do we find?

On the borders, side by side with our burghers, we find the same Uitlanders in hundreds—Hollanders, Americans, Germans, Irishmen, Frenchmen, Belgians, Scandinavians, and even Englishmen—ready to lay down their lives in order to rid themselves of these self-constituted champions.

Verily a fine champion of the oppressed is that nation, which has ever since the birth of our nation been the oppressor of the Afrikander and the native alike.

From Slagter's Nek to Laing's Nek, from the Pretoria Convention to the Bloemfontein Conference, they have ever been the treaty-breakers and robbers. The diamond-fields of Kimberley and the beautiful land of Natal were robbed from us, and now they want the gold-fields of the Witwatersrand.

Where is Waterboer to-day? He who had to be defended against the Free State is to-day without an inch of ground. Where lies Lobengula in his unknown grave to-day, and what filibusters and fortune-hunters are possessors of his country?

Where are the native chiefs of Bechuanaland now, and who owns their land?

Read the history of South Africa, and ask yourselves: 'Has the British Government been a blessing or a curse to this subcontinent?'

Brother Afrikanders! I repeat the day is at hand on which great deeds are expected of us? WAR has broken out! What is it to be? A wasted and enslaved South Africa, or—a Free, United South Africa?

Come, let us stand shoulder to shoulder and do our holy duty![1] The Lord of Hosts will be our Leader.

BE OF GOOD CHEER.

F. W. REITZ.

[1] By a very curious coincidence, it happened that on the day on which I was quoting the above passage (January 16, 1902) there appeared in the *Times* of that

The closing paragraphs of the above rabid address might have been taken for the text of this work, the object of which has been to prove that the attitude of the Dutch population of South Africa, sometimes disguised, but more often open, has been determined by the pretence that England 'has ever since the birth of our nation been the oppressor of the Afrikander and the native alike. From Slagter's Nek to Laing's Nek, from the Pretoria Convention to the Bloemfontein Conference, they have ever been the treaty-breakers and robbers. The diamond-fields of Kimberley and the beautiful land of Natal were robbed from us, and now they want the gold-fields of the Witwatersrand.'

How, in the face of this open confession, can the pro-Boers maintain that the antipathy of the Dutch to the English dated no further back than the Jameson Raid and the accession to office of Mr. Chamberlain? That Mr. Reitz's rhapsody was not the outcome of a moment of insanity is proved by the fact that he developed and expanded it into a pamphlet of a hundred pages, the translation of which we owe to the patriotic fervour of Mr. W. T. Stead. The very fact that this pamphlet bears the title 'A Century of Wrong' is in itself an admission that racial hatred in South Africa—at least, so far as the Dutch are concerned—is of no mushroom growth, but has existed ever since the occupation of the Cape of Good Hope by the British a hundred years ago.

Before closing this chapter it is essential, for the purpose of understanding the stupendous task imposed upon Lord Milner, to realize the unsatisfactory relations which existed

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date a despatch from its New York correspondent, headed 'A Boer Pamphlet.' It runs as follows:

'*New York, January* 15.—A pamphlet which the *New York Times* to-day describes as "quite the most remarkable document in some ways that ever came into this office," is being freely circulated. It is issued by the Pan-German League, printed in New York and written by the Rev. Diedrich von Slooten, late a Predikant in the South African Republic. The writer asks that the voice of Christian America should be raised to put an end to the South African War, but it is not this appeal which makes the pamphlet remarkable. Mr. Slooten repeatedly states that the Boer aim from the beginning of the trouble has been to drive the English out of South Africa, and in answer to the argument that the Boers should not have started the war, he says that Mr. Kruger was Divinely commanded to do so. Mr. Slooten declares that the object of the Boers is holy, and that their cause is certain to triumph in the end. The pamphlet consists largely of quotations from the Bible interlaced with grotesque libels on the British troops, but it is interesting as exhibiting quite unconsciously the real temper of the Boer people.'

between the High Commissioner and the Ministers of Cape Colony.

I have already expressed my opinion, an opinion shared by the majority of loyalists in South Africa, that Mr. Schreiner was himself absolutely true to his allegiance in thought, word, and deed. But his credulity, of which I have given some instances and of which I could easily furnish many more, rendered him an easy dupe of the intriguers by whom he was surrounded. Though he believed that the British connection was essential to the welfare of Afrikanders, it was as an Afrikander that he studied the political questions of the day. He seemed to have been predestined by Nature to be a special pleader, and his subtleties and honest sophistries deceived himself even more than those whom it was his main object to convince. In some respects, and those not the least important, his character and his very virtues rendered him a more dangerous Prime Minister than an avowed Afrikander, and a half-disguised rebel such as Dr. Te Water, for instance, would have been. It was characteristic of the man that he should have been able to persuade the Afrikander party to contribute to the vote for the Imperial Navy, and to have created in the mind of Englishmen the idea that the Afrikander Bond was a loyal institution. How that remarkable result was achieved I will briefly show. There was a Bond majority in the Legislative Assembly, and it is obvious that if that majority had voted against any contribution by the Cape to the Imperial Navy it would have been negatived. As the vote was agreed to, Englishmen who were not familiar with Cape politics assumed that the Bond must be essentially loyal. Mr. Merriman, who was Mr. Schreiner's colleague, admitted, however, as he could hardly help doing, 'that there was a strong undercurrent of feeling against this vote.'[1]

How that undercurrent was stemmed may be gathered from the astute speech in which Mr. Schreiner secured the reluctant assent of his Bond followers. Mr. Schreiner said :[2]

[1] Speech at Stellenbosch, August 14, 1897.
[2] 'The South African Conspiracy,' F. W. Bell, Appendix S, p. 228.

'Whatever may be in the womb of the future for them, however much they might yet be "zelf-standig" enough in time to come, at present South Africa could not protect itself by sea. And he was convinced, as a reasonable man looking at the circumstances of the country, that for the benefit of South Africa they should continue to trust that the strong arm which now protected them would continue to afford that protection on the sea for a long period to come. They must have defence, and they could not provide it for themselves, and because they could not it was necessary that they should take an interest in its being provided for them, and that interest was the interest of a loyal colony!'

This speech of what may be called 'contingent loyalty and cupboard-love devotion' was uttered two years before the troubles with the South African Republic had reached a crisis, and only a week or so before the then Premier, Sir Gordon Sprigg, started for England to represent South Africa at the Diamond Jubilee demonstrations of 1897. The spirit in which the Bond consented to the proposal was best illustrated by a speech of Mr. Theron, who was Acting President of the Afrikander Bond in the absence of Mr. Hofmeyr, in which he said that they 'knew very well that they had too much to lose ever to let their country be under any other Power than England.' It will be seen, therefore, that the loyalty of the Afrikander Bond even at that date was not of a particularly enthusiastic kind. It owed what strength it possessed to the fear that while South Africa was weak and not united under a common flag, the withdrawal of British protection would tempt some other European Power to step into England's shoes. When Charles II. replied to the warnings of his brother James, that his subjects were hardly likely to depose him in order to put James on the throne, he was not vindicating his own character and integrity, but inveighing against that of his brother. The Afrikander Bond, in like manner, was not anxious to drive the British out of South Africa until it had assured itself that their place would not be taken by the Germans. That was the beginning and ending of the loyalty displayed in connection with the contribution to the navy.

We have seen how, during the acuter stages of the controversy, colleagues of Mr. Schreiner, doubtless without consulting their chief, were in the closest and most constant communication with those who were shortly to be the enemies

of their Queen. Let one quote a single incident at Dordrecht, in which Mr. Sauer played an important and very questionable part. Although the affair occurred after the period covered in this book, I think a complete knowledge of it will help to illustrate the attitude of the Bond Ministry. I telegraphed a résumé of the story to the *Daily Telegraph*, for which paper I then had the honour to act as Special Commissioner, but I reproduce here the more detailed version which I supplied to the Cape papers at the time, and which elicited no contradiction or explanation from Mr. Sauer himself.

I give the passage exactly as it appears in the Cape papers of October 20, 1900:

We are indebted to the courtesy of the Special Commissioner of the *Daily Telegraph* for a copy of the following message which he has cabled to London, and which will appear in to-day's issue of that paper:

When Mr. Sauer gave his meagre account in the Assembly of his relations with Hargrove,[1] he stopped short in his explanation at the 'well-meant but unsuccessful mission to Dordrecht, which was immediately followed by rebellion in that district.'[2]

A carbon copy of telegram bearing the undoubted signature of Olivier, the Boer Commandant, found in the house of Dirk Uys, Trommel, O.R.C., where Olivier had stayed, may explain Mr. Sauer's reticence.

A deputation with a letter from Mr. Sauer asking permission to hold a meeting at Barkly East met with refusal, and was formally arrested by Olivier, and subsequently released.

[1] This was the gentleman who, posing as an independent political inquirer, made himself conspicuous in Cape Colony during the early months of 1900 as a warm-hearted and disinterested supporter of the Boer cause. It was my good fortune to be able to expose the relations which had subsisted between this disinterested friend of liberty and Mr. Kruger and his Government. As a British subject he visited Pretoria while the war was still raging, and had obtained secretly from the President the sum of £1,000. Much ingenuity was displayed in the efforts to wrap up this transaction in the folds of secrecy. President Kruger did not like to be personally mixed up in the business, and he therefore instructed State Secretary Reitz to write to the Manager of the Netherlands Railway to advance the £1,000 to Mr. Hargrove for political purposes. The autograph letter of Mr. Reitz and the receipt signed by Mr. Hargrove for the money, which he was prudent enough to secure in specie, fell into our hands, and the loan was entered, amongst others of a similar character, in the ledger of the Netherlands Railway, under the heading 'Political Account to be settled hereafter with President Kruger.' Part of this money, no doubt, was used by Mr. Hargrove for the purposes of starting a Conciliation Committee in Cape Colony, which was in reality an organization for stirring up sedition, and which was also the parent of the similar organizations in London patronized, amongst others, by Mr. Leonard Courtney. How much of the money was so employed I have no means of ascertaining, but I have many extracts from speeches by Mr. Hargrove in which he affirmed absolutely that he had received no money from the Transvaal, and that the costs incurred by the formation of the Conciliation Committee had been defrayed out of his own pocket, and from a disinterested and passionate love of freedom.

[2] The quoted words are those of Lord Milner.

A meeting was held at Dordrecht on Monday, November 27, 1899, and addressed by Mr. Sauer. As the result, a second deputation was sent to Olivier ostensibly to ask him not to come to Dordrecht. The deputation consisted of P. J. de Wet, M.L.A., the Rev. J. F. Marais, O. S. Vermooten, S. J. Marais, with Hargrove as 'non-official member.'

On November 28 Olivier telegraphed to Secretary War Commission, Bloemfontein: 'To-day I already received second deputation from Dordrecht not to come to Dordrecht. This is said officially, but privately they say it is only a blind (oogen verblinding), and that we must come at once.' And he came.

The only inferences possible from this telegram are that either Olivier invented the story, or the deputation deceived Mr. Sauer, or that Mr. Sauer knew the real message, and was party to the blind. Each inference presents its difficulties.

Why should Olivier lie to the War Commission without apparent object? Was deputation composed of Mr. Sauer's host and his friend Hargrove[1] likely to deceive Mr. Sauer wilfully? Could a Minister of the Crown professing to prevent rebellion be a party to a secret invitation to the enemy to invade the Queen's dominions?

Each hypothesis seems improbable, yet, as the telegram is undoubtedly authentic, one must be true. Mr. Sauer must surely give his version. I am handing a copy of this message to the *Cape Times* and the *Cape Argus*.

In forwarding this message, the Special Commissioner of the *Daily Telegraph* adds:

'I have only cabled home such extracts from Olivier's telegram as are essential. It may, however, interest your readers in South Africa to see the message in full. It runs as follows (I give the Dutch[2] version and the translation):

A.R.M.
COMMANDANT OLIVIER,
BARKLY EAST.

SEC. WAR COMMISSION,
BLOEMFONTEIN.

28/11/99. Telegram 27th received. Have returned from Rhodes[3] to-day. Affairs arranged. Jacob Pansegrouw, formerly (of) Rouxville, appointed as R.J.P. (Resident Justice of the Peace). Shall take with me from here 300 burghers, exclusive of burghers left on borders. To-day already I received the second deputation from Dordrecht not to come to Dordrecht. This is asked officially, but privately they say that this is also a blind, and that we must come at once. From Dordrecht I shall go to Stormberg through Jamestown so speedily as possible. Possibly there may be other orders. In that case the despatch rider knows in which direction to go. Barkly district is wholly unarmed. Of 140 burghers got together yesterday, only 30 were armed, and also no cartridges. Therefore I shall require a good supply of rifles. Am very fatigued, but the hope of a good result sustains us.

(Signed) J. H. OLIVIER.

In connection with this subject, it may interest your readers to have such incidents as I can glean of Mr. Sauer's visit to Dordrecht, in chronological order.

[1] I since have ascertained that Mr. Sauer met Mr. Hargrove immediately after the secret interview with Olivier.

[2] I added the Dutch version.

[3] The district, not the man.

Wednesday, November 22, 1899: Mr. Sauer arrives at Sterkstroom in the afternoon, and later proceeds to Dordrecht.

Thursday, November 23: Mr. Sauer holds a meeting at Dordrecht. As a result of this meeting a deputation (No. 1), consisting of Messrs Snyman, De Wet, M.L.A., and Van Heerden, goes to Barkly East with a letter from Mr. Sauer to Commandant Olivier, requesting to be allowed to hold a meeting there. Mr. Sauer himself stays at Waschbank (Mr. P. J. De Wet's), fifteen miles from Dordrecht.

Friday, November 23: Deputation (No. 1) reaches Barkly East. Olivier refuses to allow Mr. Sauer to come and hold a meeting on 'Free State territory.' The members of the deputation are 'arrested,' but subsequently return to Dordrecht.

Saturday, November 25: Mr. Sauer still at Waschbank. Refugees from Aliwal North hold a meeting at Queenstown, and express their 'distrust and apprehension' of the senior member's (Mr. Sauer's) visit to the border. Deputation (No. 1) returns to Dordrecht.

Sunday, November 26: Mr. Sauer still at Waschbank. Mr. Hargrove with him.

Monday, November 27: Large meeting held in Dordrecht in the market-place. Mr. P. J. De Wet, M.L.A., in the chair. Mr. Sauer addresses the meeting in a forty-minutes speech,[1] and, while admitting that 'blood is thicker than water,' counsels abstention from rebellion, as England must win in the end, etc. Resolved that another deputation (De Tweede Deputatie) should proceed to Barkly East to urge Olivier not to come to Dordrecht. Deputation (No. 2) starts at 3 p.m. (The meeting was at 11 a.m.) It consisted of Mr. P. J. De Wet, M.L.A., the Rev. J. F. Marais, Mr. O. S. Vermooten, and Mr. S. J. Marais, with Mr. Hargrove thrown in, as 'a non-official member of the deputation,' according to the 'Queenstown representative,' or as 'a guest of one of the members,' as the *South African News* puts it. Mr. Sauer leaves for Indwe.

Tuesday, November 28: Olivier sends to the Secretary of the War Commission the telegram, the original and translation of which has been given.

Wednesday, November 29: Deputation leaves for Dordrecht, with the impression that Olivier and his commando will come.

Thursday, November 30: Deputation returned to Dordrecht.

Friday, December 1: Impression of deputation confirmed by arrival of a Boer commando within a few miles of Dordrecht.

Saturday, December 2: Boer commando under Olivier enters Dordrecht early in the morning.[2] Their number is between 200 and 300.

Monday, December 4: Mr. Sauer arrives in Cape Town.

But, apart from this, the public records of the attitude of the Ministry and its supporters confirm over and over again the justice of Lord Milner's reproach at Graaff Reinet —that whenever there were differences between the Imperial

[1] Is even reported to have shed tears.

[2] Where they were received with open arms, practically by the whole population.

Government and the Government of the South African Republic, the whole weight of Afrikander influence was thrown into the scale in favour of the Transvaal, without any reference to the merits of the dispute. We have seen what Sir Henry de Villiers thought of the proposals for settlement made by the Transvaal, yet Mr. Schreiner did not hesitate to communicate to the *South African News* the opinion of his Government that these proposals were eminently satisfactory. The impression created by this action of the Prime Minister was deepened by the nature of the channel he chose for the communication of his views to the public. The *South African News*, a paper controlled by Messrs. Merriman and Sauer, was so deeply committed to the advocacy of the Transvaal cause that it pursued its course of flagrant disloyalty from the beginning of the war till the paper itself was suppressed and its editor imprisoned.

Under the Cabinet system of secrecy and joint responsibility which prevails at the Cape, as in England, it is not always possible to distinguish between Mr. Schreiner and his colleagues. But the conduct of Mr. Schreiner after his Ministry broke up renders it evident that he was to a large extent the dupe of the Afrikander members of the Government. He could not have known of the secret correspondence which passed between Dr. Te Water and the Presidents of the two Republics, as, indeed, Dr. Te Water himself admitted in one of his letters to President Steyn. Nor does it seem probable that Mr. Schreiner wrote, *proprio motu*, the letter to the *South African News* which declared that the terms proposed by the Transvaal were reasonable. As I have said before, the Afrikander Bond found it extremely useful to have as Prime Minister one who was not in their secrets, and who could be put up as a loyal figurehead in any moment of embarrassment. This was demonstrated in the Cape Parliament when a very important question arose as to the importation of arms and ammunition into the Free State in the month of July, 1899. It was known to every Afrikander, and it was suspected by many loyalists, that this consignment of ammunition, which amounted to over a million rounds of Mauser or Martini cartridges, was intended for the use of

the Dutch burghers on the borders, who were expected to rise in rebellion, as they did rise, the moment war broke out. There was a debate on the question on August 28, 1899, in the Cape Assembly, raised on Sir Gordon Sprigg's motion for the adjournment of the House. That the subject was an important one can hardly be denied in face of the fact that Sir Gordon Sprigg's complaint was that

> it will be found on examination[1] of the records that the quantity (of ammunition) that has been removed during the past seven weeks is very far in excess of the total quantity of arms and ammunition that has been removed into the Free State during the whole of the preceding six months of the year.

Anyone familiar with English Parliamentary proceedings, slavishly imitated in the Cape Assembly, would have imagined that the Prime Minister would rise to offer explanations at the close of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, or that, if he had refrained from doing so, it was because he desired a general debate upon the subject. There was, in the ordinary sense of the word, no debate at all. Speaker after speaker rose on the Opposition side, generally to be met by jeers and laughter, and not a single member either of the Government or the rank and file of the Ministerial party intervened in these one-sided proceedings. Mr. Schreiner at length replied, and all he could do to allay the anxiety of the Opposition was to quote a telegram which he had received from President Steyn, which ran as follows:[2]

> With reference to the discussion regarding the importation of arms and ammunition for the Orange Free State, I believe that no assurance from my side is necessary to contradict the ridiculous, false, and malicious reports that there exists in the mind of this Government or this people any intention or contemplation of taking up weapons in any aggressive or offensive manner against the British Government or any British colony or territory. It is now still, as always, a fixed principle that the Free State will never take recourse to weapons otherwise than when attacked, or in defence of its precious rights, or in support or in fulfilment of its obligations. I utter only the desire of the whole of the people when I say that no means will be left untried by me to preserve peace in South Africa, and advance fellow-working in harmony in regard to that matter. I see no reason why those points of difference between the British Government and the South African Republic cannot be settled by peaceful methods, and I remain of the conviction that to take recourse to arms upon differences

[1] *Cape Times*, August 29, 1899.

[2] Blue-book, Cd. 43, p. 28.

such as those which exist would be to commit an offence against civilization.

Two months were not to elapse before this offence against civilization was committed by Mr. Steyn himself, but more —a great deal—than two months had elapsed since the writer of this message had importuned the Transvaal Government for arms and ammunition. And then Mr. Schreiner proceeded to make the remarkable statement—remarkable, that is, as a Minister of the Crown—that :

If I am still to see, despite my best hopes and my deep convictions, that South Africa is to be the scene of war between whites, that one race is to be set against another race in any part of Africa, I shall still say—and I say this to-day, not merely to this colony, but to South Africa and the world—that I shall do my very best to maintain for this colony the position of standing apart and aloof from the struggle, both with regard to its forces and with regard to its people.

No more unfortunate remark could possibly have been made by a Minister occupying the peculiar position in which Mr. Schreiner found himself. It was, of course, ridiculous to pretend that if Her Majesty's Government were at war any part of her dominions could stand aloof. A more unconstitutional doctrine could not be laid down ; but that was not the principal mischief of this ill-timed assertion. Messrs. Kruger and Steyn counted upon the co-operation of the Dutch population of the Cape, and not, as events were to prove, without reasonable grounds. But the next best thing that could happen to them was that Cape Colony should be neutral, and that the loyal subjects of the Queen should be forbidden to take part in a war forced upon Her Majesty by the Republics. And here they had an assurance in the most formal manner that so long as the Bond Ministry were in power this much-desired neutrality would be observed. Such an indiscretion could not escape the attention of Lord Milner, and consequently we learn from a despatch from the High Commissioner to Mr. Chamberlain of September 6, 1899 :[1]

In the course of conversation Mr. Schreiner expressed the feeling that his explanations on the subject in the House of Assembly had been greatly misunderstood. He protested against his words being interpreted as a declaration that the colony should remain neutral in case of

[1] Blue-book, Cd. 43, p. 33.

hostilities between Her Majesty s Government and the South African Republic. He had never harboured such an idea. I replied that in my opinion his words were open to this construction, and that I regretted them. In reply, he went on to explain at some length his point of view.[1] The gist of it was that, while he fully admitted that in case of war between Her Majesty's Government and any other State this colony could not be neutral, yet he felt that, in the interests of the Empire itself, the two main objects which colonial Ministers should in that case keep in view, would be to prevent civil war breaking out in the colony, and to guard against the dangers of a native rising. Undoubtedly the forces of the colony should be employed to protect the colony, and *he would regard any Minister as most culpable who ran any risk of damage being done to the colony either from the South African Republic or the Orange Free State. What he deprecated was use of colonial forces against Republics outside borders of colony. If they were so used, he feared it might be impossible to restrain a rising on the other side, and there might be a conflict within the colony itself.*[2]

What happened was the reverse of Mr. Schreiner's anticipation. Her Majesty's Government did not call upon the British colonists to take part in the conflict, but the Dutch colonists, on the other hand, invited the Boers to cross the frontier, and at once fraternized with them. Mr. Schreiner can hardly escape responsibility for having ignored the obvious sentiments of the majority on which he depended. Those sentiments were openly (for the Dutch) avowed in the memorial addressed by fifty-seven members of the Colonial Legislature a fortnight before the war, petitioning the Queen against a resort to force in the Transvaal. I have referred to this petition mainly because of a curious and not very creditable incident which rose out of it. With singular ineptitude, these fifty-seven members entrusted their petition to the care of Mr. James Molteno, the youngest member of a family in which inaccuracy seems to be inveterate and hereditary.[3] Mr. James Molteno, whose nickname in the Assembly was 'the Babe,' was the *enfant gâté* of the Afrikanders. He had no sense of responsibility either in word or deed, and on the many occasions on which it was my painful duty to listen to his puerilities in the Cape Assembly I came to the conclusion that he was (to use a delicate Manx euphemism) 'not as other men.' I venture to say that there

[1] Some length with Mr. Schreiner generally meant two hours.

[2] The italics are mine.

[3] I may here add that I heard the elder Molteno, in the Cape Assembly, state, not as a matter of hearsay, but as a fact within his own personal knowledge, that the 'Rhodes-Beit Syndicate' had a controlling influence in all the great London newspapers.

was no intelligent person in Cape Town, Dutch or English, who would have accepted as gospel any uncorroborated statement of Mr. J. A. Molteno. A contradiction issued by any person of standing to any assertion of Mr. Molteno's would have been, and was, universally accepted as final. A statement of his that Lord Milner had confided to this infantile politician his determination to break the dominion of Afrikanderdom created some sensation in England, where Mr. Molteno's character was, of course, not known. Lord Milner repudiated the statements attributed to him as 'one of the most inaccurate and misleading reports that I have ever seen.'[1] There the matter might well end but for the fact that Mr. Molteno's 'Memo of Interview with Governor,' though inaccurate and misleading as far as Lord Milner was concerned, does throw considerable light upon the attitude adopted by the fifty-seven members who entrusted him with the petition. The memorandum in question was published in the *Daily Chronicle*, then a pro-Boer organ, of November 3, 1899, under a covering letter from Mr. Percy A. Molteno.[2]

MEMO OF INTERVIEW WITH GOVERNOR.

Wednesday, October 4.

Attended Caucus meeting 11 a.m. No Ministers present. *Inter alia*, strong desire expressed that the petition to Queen should be published, and was asked any reply received. Determined to see Walrond[3] as to whether petition had been received and replied to. Go to Government House before twelve noon; ask for Walrond—see Walrond; tells me answer been received and will communicate it to me within quarter of an hour—asks me to wait. Governor comes in—tells me that reply received and unfavourable—that the Government consider time quite gone by to appoint Commission—asks me where I shall be to receive reply. I reply at the 'House'—he says may expect it in ten minutes. I say, 'Why is it too late? the Transvaal has accepted the Commission.' He says, 'Yes, but the Government cannot now revert to the position of August 2.' I say, 'Why not? Surely the counter-proposals were never intended to supersede the Government despatch—they were made on the distinct understanding that the offer remained open.' He replied, 'Well, I myself think that a *bonâ-fide* misunderstanding has occurred,' but he said, 'It is useless to discuss it, the time for that has long ago gone by.' He asks me to sit down, and we sit down; long conversation ensues. I say, 'The position is dreadful; can nothing be done? Thousands of honest hearts will be broken.' He replies British Government determined not to go back to the inquiry stage; he says he fears immediate hostilities,

[1] Blue-book, Cd. 43, p. 239. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 128.
[3] Mr. O. Walrond, Lord Milner's private secretary.

that he is now wiring Steyn, and Steyn replies putting blame on British Government, and charging them with responsibility if Boer attack. I reply, 'Is that unreasonable, seeing what Government doing? The redcoat is where he has never been before in South Africa.' He replies that our men are thirty miles from the border at Glencoe, and the Boers are on the boundary. I say, 'I am not referring to Natal, but to the western border; and can you reasonably expect the Boer to wait until they are swallowed up?' I say, 'Surely something can still be done; they have wise men, and we have wise men.' I then said to His Excellency, 'But does your Excellency realize the awful horrors of war in this country?' He says, 'It will be all right after it is over.' I say, 'That's the mistake; it is not the actual war I fear so much as the terrible after-effects—this country won't be fit to live in, English and Dutch will never come together again.'—He says, 'Oh yes, they will; it is the war I fear and loss of life.' I reply, 'The dead will feel no longer; it is the living after—this country will be a hell;' I say, 'Surely all this could have been avoided; patience and progress are all on our side. Why force a hurried issue?' He says, 'We are determined to settle the question, once and for all;' he says, 'Why all this arming going on? this must be stopped.' I reply, 'Because a guardsman and an officer, Colonel Robert White, told his superiors before the Raid that they (the Boers) were an easy prey to the first comer along, and that is why, and very foolish they would have been not to be so (armed);' but I said, 'None of us like the forts, and Consuls and Ambassadors, and that would go all in time.' I further say that this is putting an awful strain on the loyalty of our colonists.' He said he pitied men like Fraser and Brounger; the others were different. I said, 'Change places, and supposing the Transvaal an English Republic, and the conditions changed here, would you or could you prevent Englishmen from helping to defend their brothers and parents being shot?' About now Belgrave[1] or someone came in hurriedly, and left after handing the Governor a slip of paper. I stood up and Governor moved to where I sat on sofa; he did not let me go. I said, 'I could never have dreamed of Africa coming to this.' Governor replied, 'Well, you are all saying it is the capitalists;' he said, 'That is what I feel very much. It is untrue; I am not in favour of capitalists.' I reply, 'Why, then, has Rhodes and Co. captured all the leading English newspapers, *Times* included, and nearly all English Cape papers, and why are they spending all this money misleading England? There is Rhodes the Raider backed up by England, and regarded as the great Empire-builder of our Empire in Africa;' I said, 'The simple Boer he looks at plain facts and does not regard political refinement. It is these suspicions as to independence that render him dogged; if only he could be certain his independence were not assailed, peace might be secured.' He replies, 'That they are moving over forces and joining an issue.' I say, 'What can you expect after the last despatch, telling them that if by Friday last they don't give in that they will hear something else? They are bound to believe you;' I said, 'I cannot understand all this vague hinting that the Dutch are disloyal, I know them well, and I have never heard a word of disloyalty. I know their deep reverence for the Queen and their love of the Constitution. Three years ago it was all German intrigue, and now to poison English minds it is Dutch disloyalty, and a vague idea of republicanism working outwards from the Transvaal. It is a new, vague, untrue assertion.' He rising, replies, 'Well, Mr. Molteno, it is no use; I am determined to break the dominion of Afrikanderdom.' Thereupon I left, feeling utterly hopeless.

[1] Now Duke of Westminster, at that time A.D.C. to Lord Milner.

It may be as well to give Lord Milner's detailed account of what actually took place :[1]

The conversation arose in this way. After I had disposed of the business which actually brought Mr. Molteno to see me, and which was to learn the nature of the reply of Her Majesty's Government to the address from fifty-seven members of the Colonial Legislature, I intentionally retained Mr. Molteno, whom I have known personally for a long time, in order to speak to him in a frank and wholly informal manner about the general state of political affairs. I adopted this course with him, as I did with several members of his party who came to see me for one reason or another during the last few days of the session, with the intention of clearing away some of the more extreme misconceptions with which partisan bitterness had enveloped the controversy between Her Majesty's Government and the Republic. I desired, and except in Mr. Molteno's case I believe I succeeded, not, perhaps, in converting those to whom I spoke to my own views, but in making them appreciate and respect mine, and gain some conception of the real objects of Her Majesty's Government, totally different as they are from the legend which the Republican and rebel press have sedulously instilled into the minds of the public.[2]

The principal matters touched upon in this conversation were :

1. The immediate political situation. With regard to this, I pointed out to Mr. Molteno that, if war was to be avoided, it was to the Republics that appeals to preserve the peace should now be addressed. Not only were their actions exceedingly menacing, but President Steyn's protests against our military movements (movements unimportant compared to those on the other side) suggested to my mind a desire to pick a quarrel. I discussed the various stages of the negotiations, showing how, in my opinion, Her Majesty's Government had, over and over again, tried to find a basis of understanding, while the South African Republic had never been able to accept any proposal of ours at the time when it was made . . . while (quite apart from the Greene-Smuts pourparlers, with regard to which I deprecated the charge of bad faith on either side) the conduct of negotiations by the South African Republic was dilatory and bewildering in the extreme. I said that, if peace was desired, it would be the natural course to wait for the fresh proposals indicated by Her Majesty's Government, and which, in view of the gravity of the situation, the latter was bound to consider very carefully ; but that, if the South African Republic wished to forestall such proposals, it was perfectly possible for them, directly, or through President Steyn, to make a fresh offer, that Her Majesty's Government would not stand on its dignity if it was a question of the maintenance of peace. But a fresh proposal must be of a definite character, and, personally, I did not conceal my opinion that it was improbable that a definite offer would be made, as the Republics appeared to me to have resolved upon war.

2. As regards the war, should it come, and its after-effects, I took a very different view from Mr. Molteno. He seemed to me to think that the war itself would be a comparatively small matter, in view of the disproportion of power on the two sides. *I, on the other hand, have always regarded war with the Republics as a very formidable war indeed, owing to the colossal armaments of the South African Republic. In view of*

[1] Blue-book, Cd. 43, p. 239.

[2] It must be remembered that the rebel press included all the organs in Cape Colony which supported the Schreiner Ministry.

these armaments, I could not but anticipate a terrible struggle, the last thing in the world which I or any man could look forward to otherwise than with the gravest solicitude.[1] But, as to the after-effects of the war, I deprecated the tendency to anticipate a condition of permanent bitterness and hostility between the races. The future would depend upon the system adopted when the war was over. With a policy of fair treatment and equal rights, the wounds inflicted would heal in time, and there would be no enduring discontent where there was no grievance. Moreover, South Africa would cease to be what the policy of the South African Republic had unfortunately made it, a huge arsenal, and become, like other young countries, a peaceful, agricultural, and industrial State, intent upon the material development of its vast resources. It is these views, which Mr. Molteno has apparently summarized in the words, 'It will be all right after it is over.'

3. With regard to the causes of the war, I am less at issue with Mr. Molteno's statement of what I said than on other questions, though here, also, I do not recognise my actual words. But I did protest strongly against the misrepresentation (the most persistent of all in the armoury of the opponents of Her Majesty's Government) that what we were contending for was the interest of capitalists, or that Great Britain wished to subjugate the South African Republic because of its mineral wealth.[2] As far as the mere material position went, Great Britain and the capitalists alike could afford to be satisfied. To represent the capitalists as the authors of the disturbance was false. In the first place, the capitalists were divided. In the next place, those capitalists who had espoused the cause of reform, which, I thought, did them credit, had done so, not spontaneously, but reluctantly, feeling that they could not abandon the cause of the Uitlander population as a whole; and if it was unjust to represent the capitalists as the authors of the agitation, it was still more so to speak of the British Government or of myself as their 'instrument.' And in this connection I stated what I did consider to be the real root difference between our policy and that of the South African Republic and its sympathizers—viz., that the latter aimed at maintaining throughout South Africa the predominance of a single race, while we were contending for equality. I, personally, had been represented as the enemy of the Dutch population because I was averse to the attempt to maintain the predominance of one white race over another, irrespective of their relative numbers. But, as a matter of fact, if the case was reversed, and the non-Dutch South Africans were trying to oppress their Dutch fellow-countrymen, I should be just as much opposed to them as to the Dutch oligarchy of the Transvaal. It is this opinion, to which I adhere, which is, no doubt, responsible for Mr. Molteno's statement that I said 'I am determined to break the dominion of Afrikanderdom.' The use of these words I absolutely deny, and I deeply regret that they should have been attributed to me. Not only do they breathe a spirit of arrogance and egotism which I hope is not characteristic, but, standing by themselves, they are calculated to convey a wholly false impression of the tenor of the remarks, the substance of which I have just stated.

Among the many baseless charges brought against Lord Milner by his critics in England the most astounding is

[1] The italics are mine.

[2] These words were written some twenty days after Lord Salisbury's speech at the Guildhall, in which the sentence, 'We seek no territory, we seek no gold,' was wrenched from its context for very obvious purposes.

probably that of lack of patience and toleration. I have foreborne, and shall continue to forbear in the few remaining pages of this book, from bearing personal testimony to Lord Milner's character. I confidently appeal, however, to those who have known him as long as I have had the privilege of doing—that is, for upwards of thirty years—and to those whose acquaintance with him, though shorter in time, has been more continuous than my own, to say whether amongst all his qualities they would not put, as I put, patience and a broad-minded impartiality, in the very foremost rank. I remember as if it were but yesterday the boyish controversies of the Oxford Union Society, which has been the school of so many distinguished statesmen. In the ardour of youth there is little sympathy for a middle party. Men, as we emphatically called ourselves in those days, were either unbending Tories, as was my own case, or pronounced Liberals. Lord Milner, though he belonged to the latter class, was even then more free from partisanship than anyone of his own age I ever encountered, and I recall with some satisfaction that, in the debates and divisions in which we both took part, Lord Milner and I spoke and voted on the same side more frequently than on opposite sides. I merely recall these bygone days to show that it was antecedently improbable that the boy should lose the broad-minded forbearance as he developed in years, wisdom, and experience. And that the antecedently improbable never became an actual fact those who have worked with him either as his official superiors or his official subordinates have borne, and continue to bear, the most glowing testimony. In Egypt and at Somerset House it was these moral and intellectual characteristics which were always cited to justify the rare esteem in which Alfred Milner was held by all sorts and conditions of men. If, then, his youth and early middle age were conspicuous for the qualities which are now denied to him, is it conceivable that the mere transfer to South Africa extinguished in an instant the light of other days?

Sir Bartle Frere, in an address to the Colonial Institute in February, 1881, defending the Imperial Colonists against charges of indifference to the rights or happiness of the native races, said:

The popular English misgiving regarding the treatment of natives by colonists or a colonial Government is justifiable only on the supposition that all our countrymen who go to the other hemisphere leave behind them the conscientious sense of moral obligation which guided them in this country.

Some such supposition is necessary before we can understand, and, much more, concur in, the theory that Lord Milner's moral character underwent a complete change when he crossed the equator. The hypothesis is unnecessary, for the phenomenon it is invented to explain never existed. I will say nothing here of the long-suffering patience which he displayed in his negotiations with President Kruger at the Conference until he saw that the South African Republic was trifling with a serious problem in order, as Dr. Te Water put it, to gain time. But it was in connection with his own Ministry at the Cape, after the elections of 1898, that he made clear to all men his freedom from bias or partisanship. The electoral success of the Afrikander Bond which he, better than most men, knew to be attributable in a considerable measure to lavish outlays from the Transvaal Secret Service, could not be other than distasteful and depressing to him. Lord Milner could not ignore that the crisis prophesied twenty years before by Sir Bartle Frere had fully matured. He could not shut his eyes to the goal to which the Afrikander party was openly making. In the hour of their triumph at the polls they did not conceal their ambition of reducing to the faintest shadow the Imperial supremacy in South Africa. A less liberal-minded man would have resented the indifference, or rather the scorn, with which his advice to the Afrikander Bond, given at Graaff Reinet, had been greeted. He had warned the party then in opposition that it lay in their power, and in theirs only, so to influence the stubborn and reactionary Executive at Pretoria as to remove for ever the possibility of any interference on our part with the independence of the South African Republic. He had pointed out to them that the exercise of this influence need not, or should not, estrange them from their kinsmen across the Vaal, while it would consolidate the feelings of loyalty and mutual inter-dependence between the Queen's subjects of all nationalities in the British colonies. The

advice was scouted, not because it threatened South Africa with discord, but because, if followed, it must promote unity. Unity the Afrikanders desired; it was, indeed, the object of all their aspirations and all their intrigues, but it was a unity based upon the exclusion, if not of the British flag, at least of British ideas of equality and justice. Yet even when the nominees of the party which had almost insolently flouted his counsels became, by the result of the elections, his constitutional advisers, he never in his dealings with them displayed any trace of resentment. One instance of this rigid impartiality may be given on the authority of Mr. Rhodes.

The Progressives, of whom Mr. Rhodes was the acknowledged leader, imagined—whether correctly or not it is impossible to say—that delay of a few weeks in the assembling of Parliament would enable them to gain over such members of the majority as were not irrevocably committed to the policy of the Afrikander Bond. Mr. Rhodes was deputed to wait upon the Governor to see if some such extension of the recess could not be arranged. It lay entirely with Lord Milner to summon Parliament at such time as he thought fit within the limits prescribed by the Constitution. It is possible that if he had acceeded to Mr. Rhodes' request the Sprigg Ministry might have scrambled through another session, and the history of South Africa might have been written in a different sense. But Lord Milner considered that words which he himself had used when consenting to a dissolution pledged him to summon Parliament on the earliest convenient occasion after the declaration of the results of the election. Mr. Rhodes was not absent very many minutes upon his errand. He returned almost at once to the headquarters of the Progressive Council, and he reported that Lord Milner's face when he announced his errand satisfied him that argument was superfluous.

'Your Excellency,' he said, 'I see, has made up your mind.'

'Yes,' replied Lord Milner.

'Then there is no further use in talking about it,' said Mr. Rhodes, and the interview came to an end.

The result was the overthrow of the Sprigg administra-

tion and the substitution of a Bond Ministry, with a non-Bondsman, Mr. Schreiner, at its head. It was then that Lord Milner's extraordinary patience was exposed to its severest trial. For the Prime Minister he had a great personal admiration and esteem; he could not, however, blind himself to the fact to which Mr. Schreiner's eyes were only opened too late: that behind the Prime Minister were colleagues whose ideas of loyalty to the Constitution and to the British connection were different from those of their titular chief and absolutely antagonistic to those of Lord Milner. Incidents occurred which might easily have ruffled the temper of men far less sensitive than the Governor. I will give one on the authority of a very distinguished and disinterested official in Cape Colony. In the early days of the Schreiner administration it was the habit—as, indeed, it was almost the duty—of Ministers to attend the receptions and social functions given by the Governor. Towards the closing days of the Schreiner Ministry, three at least of his principal colleagues pointedly refrained from attending Government House except on strictly official occasions. Their absence, however, from the social gatherings released Lord Milner from an embarrassment of a somewhat distressing character. Two of Mr. Schreiner's colleagues, of whom one at least had the training and education of a gentleman, used to post themselves in the immediate vicinity of what in the colonies is the equivalent of the throne, and there indulge in audible tones in the most ill-bred and ill-natured criticism of the persons, characters, and belongings of those of their political opponents who happened to be present. In other respects these members, the most influential in the Cabinet, neglected no opportunity of showing studied discourtesy to the representative of the Crown. For instance, they absented themselves from the ceremonial function of the opening of Parliament, in which the Governor reads the Colonial substitute for the King's Speech. These exhibitions of bad breeding were, however, of but subordinate importance. In grave political matters the policy of Mr. Schreiner's colleagues was to thwart what they knew to be the object of the Governor. That object was merely to fulfil the duties he was appointed to discharge.

The representative of the Crown has one function which is paramount to all others: it is to see, in the old Roman phrase, that no injury is done to the Commonwealth. No one recognised more clearly than Lord Milner the limitations imposed upon the Governor in a self-governing colony with regard to purely internal and domestic relations, and I challenge any of his critics to produce a single instance of unwarranted interference, or, for that matter, of interference at all, with the domestic policy of any Ministry that advised him. But it is often forgotten that he was not only Governor of Cape Colony, but Her Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa at large. In that capacity it was not from Cape Town or Maritzburg or Bulawayo that he received his instructions and advice; it was from Downing Street. I have elsewhere expressed my views upon the disadvantages attendant on the combination of the functions of High Commissioner with those of the Governor of Cape Colony. Principal amongst them is the jealousy of other colonies and dependencies, which realize that one only of their number has immediately the ear of the High Commissioner. The grave problem with which Lord Milner was sent out to deal was one which only secondarily affected the colony of which he was Governor, though it affected that colony most deeply. The differences existing in South Africa at the time of Lord Milner's arrival which had been developing for many years were not differences between the Cape Colony and the two republics, but between the Imperial Government and its subjects and the Executive in the Transvaal.

Lord Milner was the representative of British supremacy in the whole of South Africa. As such he was in duty bound to consider and defend the interests of all British subjects between the Zambesi and Simons Bay. It was perhaps natural that Cape politicians should have failed to realize that the old order had changed, giving place to the new. Time was when the Cape Colony was practically the only dependency of the Crown in South Africa. The investment of the Governor with special functions as High Commissioner was due in those days to the fact that there were native territories not under the immediate control of the Colonial

Ministry. To secure justice to the natives was the primary object of the original arrangement, but Cape Colony, long after it had lost its position of being South Africa, still arrogated to itself the sole authority to express opinions upon South African affairs. This mistaken idea, though not unnatural in the case of a generation of colonists whose early life had been passed in conditions which knew only Cape Colony, was also entertained by a number of persons at home who, at least, might have been expected to realize the changes effected within less than a quarter of a century. Politically, the position of High Commissioner was vastly more important than that of the Governor of Cape Colony, in the sense in which the position of the Viceroy of India is superior to that of the Governors of the provinces into which India is divided. The difference may be expressed in the terms 'Imperial' and 'provincial.'

It was not as the provincial figure-head of a colony—important as Cape Colony was—that Lord Milner was appointed High Commissioner. His main duties consisted of safeguarding Imperial interests in the whole of South Africa, of which Cape Colony was but a part. The problem which he was sent out to solve—subject, of course, to the supervision of Downing Street—was not to settle the internal affairs of Cape Colony, but to cope with the difficulties which had risen with what was practically a foreign Power. Had there been no question of suzerainty, the case of the Uitlanders in the Transvaal would have been dealt with directly by the Foreign Office.

The work of the Foreign Office has grown, and is growing, at an appalling rate of progress, and it has to follow and control events in every part of the world. The work of the Colonial Office in normal periods is sufficiently laborious, but, as a rule, the Colonial Secretary can concentrate his whole time and ability on any one particular question which arises with regard to 'Britain over seas'; but the accident, fortunate as it was, which threw the direction of South African matters into the capable and vigorous hands of Mr. Chamberlain, was, after all, but an accident. It is important to bear this in mind, because, if the difficulties with the Transvaal had come within the purview of the Foreign Minister, the

determining voice in the negotiations claimed by Ministers in the Cape Colony would have been pitched in a far lower key. No doubt Lord Salisbury would have listened to the suggestions of the Cape Ministry as well as to that of Natal and the governing body of Rhodesia, but he would not have felt bound to accept their advice, still less would he have allowed himself to be dictated to. Had the Transvaal been in theory what it was in fact—a foreign Power—Lord Milner would probably have been British Minister at Pretoria, and not High Commissioner of South Africa. In such circumstances, though the claims of the Cape Colony to be heard in a case closely affecting their interests might have been allowed, it would have been from Lord Milner, and Lord Milner only, that direct advice would have been sought.

It is easy to find a parallel to the situation in South Africa from this point of view. In 1896 there arose a serious difference between Great Britain and the United States of America on a rather trifling question connected with the boundaries of Venezuela. Had war resulted from the conflict of opinion between President Cleveland and Lord Salisbury, it would have been a calamity of the first order to humanity at large. The first and most serious consequences, however, must have been felt by the Dominion of Canada, which would have certainly been invaded. I have no doubt that the Government of the Dominion was consulted and kept informed of every step taken by the Foreign Office, but no one has ever contended that the opinion of Canada did affect or could have affected the course of diplomatic negotiations. That, as the colonies all the world over recognised, is the function of the Imperial Government. It is, no doubt, a strong argument in favour of Imperial federation and of the representation of the colonies in the Imperial Parliament. Recognition of the corollaries of a proposition does not, however, destroy the validity of the proposition itself.

Now, let us apply this analogy to the South African difficulty. Cape Colony was interested in the peaceful settlement of the Transvaal Question in the same sense and to the same extent as Canada was interested in a pacific solution of the Venezuelan controversy, and the weight to be attached to advice given by the Cape Ministry was neither greater

nor less than that given to similar suggestions from the Dominion Government in the other case. It is urged with peculiar incongruity that the existence of so many Boer sympathizers of Dutch blood in the colony ought to have invested the advice of Cape Ministers with additional authority. Supposing that half the colonists in the Dominion were notoriously anxious for incorporation in the United States, and that the Ministry of the day was dependent for its existence on the support of this moiety of the population, would anyone have contended that these circumstances lent additional strength to the advice of the Dominion Ministry on the management of affairs which did not directly concern them? Yet the Cape Ministry arrogated to itself, not for the first time, the right to a determining voice in all South African controversies within or without its borders.

As High Commissioner, it would have been theoretically open to Lord Milner to ignore even suggestions from Cape Colony upon the relations between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic. To have done so, of course, would have been extremely unwise and impolitic. He might with even greater reason have resisted any attempt on the part of the Ministry to dictate to him, yet the High Commissioner did neither of these things. This statesman, charged with lack of forbearance and with lording it over his responsible advisers, listened with patient attention to all the advice tendered to him, and reasoned with, instead of rebuking, those who attempted to dictate his policy. Had he thought fit to dismiss his Ministers as Sir Bartle Frere had done twenty years before him, he had no lack of pretexts for doing so. He might, for example, have sent Mr. Schreiner and his colleagues about their business on the day on which the Prime Minister communicated to the public press his approval of the terms offered by Mr. Kruger, which, in the opinion of the High Commissioner, were absolutely inadmissible. When he found that the Cape Government at an acute stage of the crisis was transmitting arms and ammunition through the colony for the use of its neighbours against their only possible enemy, the British Government, he might most constitutionally have dispensed with their services; when he discovered at a later date that colleagues of

Mr. Schreiner had been carrying on a private and, in the circumstances, an illicit correspondence with the Governments of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, he would have had ample justification for dismissing them. Mr. Schreiner could hardly have complained if his notification of the neutrality of the colony had been followed by a demand for his resignation. Even when the Ministry was hopelessly divided on the question of the treatment of rebels, and when it was manifest that they could not face Parliament with any prospect of success, Lord Milner waited for the spontaneous resignation of the Cabinet before he looked about for their successors. That he was hampered by the constant interference of unsympathetic Ministers in the discharge of duties over which they had no control; that every encouragement that could be indirectly given to the Boers was forthcoming from the Cape Ministry; and that its supporters lent encouragement to the enemy and increased the bitterness of the struggle, and made directly for its prolongation, he as well as they knew.

Of all this Lord Milner was aware, and he was equally conscious of the fact that the dismissal of the Schreiner Ministry would have been extremely popular with all classes of loyalists at the Cape, and at home would only have been criticised severely by those who censured every step he took. It was in his nature and in his appreciation of the value of constitutional principles and precedents that we must find the clue to the long-suffering and forbearance with which he tolerated the hampering tactics of the Cape Government. Looking backward, one sees that the contest would have been briefer and certainly less bitter if Lord Milner had suspended the Constitution at the very outbreak of the war. Yet however much he may regret the consequences, I do not think that he has ever repented of giving strict constitutional government in Cape Colony the fairest possible trial. If the refusal in the case of strong temptations to suspend the Constitution was an error, the evils of the mistake are only temporary; the good results of upholding the principles of self-government in times of great stress and strain will be felt in South Africa long after the war has become a matter of history. His self-restraint was a guarantee to the Boers

which, some time or other, they will recognise, that so deep-rooted is the attachment of Great Britain to the principles of liberal self-government that it will stand to those principles even in its own despite.

Lord Milner's difficulties with his Ministry did not end with a change of Government, but the shortcomings of the Sprigg administration were quite different in character from those of its predecessor. Sir Gordon Sprigg's colleagues were loyal to the core, and had the fullest confidence in the wisdom and foresight of Lord Milner; but they were nervous and timorous men, ever conscious of the compact Opposition with which they were confronted, doubtful from day to day of the support of the cross benches, and standing in almost ludicrous awe of the bitter tongues and bitter pens at the disposal of the anti-English party. With these difficulties, however, I have no intention of dealing, for they would carry me into the period covered by the war, upon which my self-imposed limitations—at least, in this book—prevent me from encroaching.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

As I write these concluding pages the war is not yet over. So many prophecies have been falsified, so many fluctuations of fortune have been experienced, that the folly of hazarding even an approximate conjecture of the date of its conclusion would be more than usually gratuitous. But whether its duration is to be counted by weeks, months, or years, its end is predestined as inexorably as the course of the planets. With the outbreak of the war came to a definite conclusion the one long chapter of South African history with which I have attempted to deal in these pages. Lord Milner did not create the problem which he was called upon to solve. It had existed in various forms showing greater or less vitality ever since Great Britain took possession of the Cape of Good Hope, a step dictated by motives not unlike those which prompted the pioneers of our Indian Empire, and which involved consequences, then unforeseen, no less momentous and beneficial. Our acquisition of the Dutch possessions in South Africa, bought honestly with our money and defended with our blood, led to the establishment of our supremacy over a country nearly as large as Europe. The difficulties with which we have had to contend in South Africa were in marked contrast to those which we have confronted and overcome in India. In that crowded area of the Orient we had to deal with a population inured through centuries to subjection, and to whom the ideas of personal liberty and self-government were foolish and indeed meaningless. In India the sword was the ruler, the legislator, the judge—nay, even the teacher of morals and of religion.

In South Africa, on the other hand, we found a population small indeed in size, imbued with the principles of European civilization, but of the European civilization of the sixteenth, and not of the nineteenth century. It was not, however, the orthodox principles of the sixteenth century, but their reverse, that the descendants of the Free Burghers and the Huguenots almost adored. Their hatred of feudalism and the feudal system became almost a religion, and coloured their attitude towards all forms of government, however humane and tolerant. Personal freedom—freedom, that is, not only from the law, but from the conventions of social life—was their ideal, and because they so loved this absolute emancipation they became almost idolaters of isolation. It was not land hunger that prompted the Boer to secure farms far beyond his power to cultivate, it was merely the sense that the broader his acres the further would he be removed from intercourse with his neighbour.

The main distinction between the Briton and the Boer is that the former is gregarious and the latter prone to solitude. From this root difference follows as an inevitable consequence that the Briton loves order and government by consent, while the Boer's ideal is, in the literal sense of the word, anarchy; not anarchy as is understood in modern Europe, but anarchy in the meaning of the Greek from which it is derived—to wit, no government at all. Anarchy of this description is only possible in the wilderness or in a country of practically boundless extent. It is impossible where men are gathered together in towns or even hamlets. It is a familiar experience of history that the heir-at-law of anarchy is a dictatorship, and the inevitable successor to autocracy is revolt. The Cæsars were the natural followers of the Latin oligarchy in Rome when the latter had forgotten how to rule. To the autocracy of Louis XIV. succeeded ultimately the unbridled authority of mob-law. The Directorate was a mere stepping-stone to the Dictatorship. Even in the milder revolution of 1848 the same phenomena are clearly observable. The Boer, when he was not an anarchist—using the phrase still in its original sense—was either a dictator or the obedient servant of a dictator. For purposes of warfare against savage or even civilized enemies the régime of

the Boers was sheer military despotism. The moment that the common danger, which demanded absolute subordination, passed away, the Boer reverted to his beloved isolation and independence. In a community so disposed slavery found its most congenial soil. The will of the master was law, and the sjambok was the weapon of the law. The main objection to the institution of slavery is that it is bad, not for the slaves, but for the masters; for the slave, when he belongs to a race not yet emerged from barbarism, the fetters in which he finds himself are not by any means the bonds of bitterness. In an almost infinite majority of cases the slave has never known freedom, and has, therefore, no abstract love of liberty. He is not enamoured of work, and work is the cross which he has to bear. But in return he knows that from all the other perils and miseries which beset the natural man he will be protected by a master to whom he is valuable property, and whose interest it is not only to keep him alive, but to maintain him at the highest pitch of physical fitness. It is for the master that the evil results of slavery are chiefly reserved. The arrogance born of unlimited authority over creatures of his own genus is the parent of tyranny. Within the boundaries of his own farm the Boer is a tyrant, beyond them he is an anarchist, and this fact accounts for his capacity for effective military service, and his inability to establish anything like permanent civil government. And so it naturally came to pass in the long-run that the Boer who would brook no interference with his individual liberty on the veld, ruled in Pretoria and Johannesburg with a tyrant's rod of iron. There was no medium in his eyes between absolute equality and personal independence on the one hand, and unlimited authority and complete servitude on the other. That was the Dutch system which could not live side by side with the British system. There is a Dutch proverb in South Africa to the effect that 'the Boers drive the blacks and the British drive the Boers northwards.' It only means that the primitive institutions of barbarism must yield to the more developed system of semi-civilization, and that that, in its turn, must give way to the higher civilization. In the progress of the world the old Wykehamist

motto is fulfilled: 'Aut disce, aut decede, manet sors tertia cædi.'

Out of the conflict of these two systems arose, as it has been the object of this book to demonstrate, the racial antipathies of South Africa. The first skirmish occurred within two years of our legal entry upon our possessions in South Africa. It gave rise to the incident of Slagter's Nek,[1] with which I have dealt in an earlier chapter.

A score of years was to follow before the antagonistic systems came again into direct conflict. As I have pointed out, it was not so much the abolition of slavery, but the whole attitude of Great Britain towards native races, that produced the irreconcilable antagonism of the two races, which took concrete form in the Great Trek of 1835. I hope I have made it clear in the preceding pages that I have no sympathy with the sentiments of Exeter Hall. The Boer attitude towards the natives was not wholly bad, nor was the British attitude wholly good; but the gulf which separated them was unbridgeable. We could have had union in South Africa at any time; again and again our supremacy would have been ungrudgingly recognised, but for this one grave cause of offence between us. When the pro-Boer holds up for our admiration the administration and spirit of what was once the Orange Free State, he forgets two important facts: one, that the Orange Free State was essentially the creation of a single man, and that man Sir John Brand, born and bred in an English atmosphere and wedded to English ideas; and the second no less important, namely, that in the Orange Free State there was practically no Native Question. It was our disposition to protect the native that led to the revolt against the annexation of 1877. That truth was demonstrated by the successful persistence with which the Boer authorities succeeded in ridding them-

[1] It is curious to note how persistent is the legend of Slagter's Nek. As this book is passing through the press, Dr. Conan Doyle has issued a very valuable pamphlet on 'The War in South Africa: its Cause and Conduct.' Speaking of that exclusively Dutch incident, he says (p. 12): 'A rising with bloodshed followed the arrest of a Dutch farmer who had maltreated his slave. It was suppressed, and five of the participants were hanged. This punishment was unduly severe and exceedingly injudicious. A brave race can forget the victims of the field of battle, but never those of the scaffold. The making of political martyrs is the last insanity of statesmanship.'

selves of the presence of a British official at their capital entrusted with the duty of investigating native complaints. It cropped up again in the more recent episode of the interview between Lord Kitchener and General Botha on February 28, 1901. The second question raised by the Boer Commandant was whether a Boer would be able to have a rifle to protect him from natives; and the fourth was the Kaffir Question. This, as Lord Kitchener pointed out, 'turned at once on the franchise of Kaffirs, and a solution seemed to be that franchise should not be given to the Kaffirs until after representative government was granted to colonies.'

It may not be amiss here, though it is beyond the scope of the present book, to point out that Lord Kitchener was instructed so far to meet the views of the Boers that, in the terms he offered in consideration of a complete military surrender, the sixth and seventh clauses provided that 'the burghers be allowed sporting firearms, and that the Kaffirs should have the protection of the law, but should not have the vote.'

It would, of course, be extravagant to maintain that the present war rose directly out of the question of the treatment of the natives. It did not. But it most emphatically resulted from the habits of thought and system of government developed in the Boer mind by the view they held of their predestined place in South Africa. They believed that they were the chosen people, and that they were Divinely ordained either to exterminate the natives or to employ them as hewers of wood and drawers of water. The advent of another white race, which believed neither in absolute equality nor in absolute servitude, was a stumbling-block to the Boer. Practically he recognised no *tertium quid* between these two extremes, and when he was called upon to govern many thousands of this third race, he imagined that he had only two alternatives to choose between, either the system of absolute equality which he recognised among his fellow-burghers, or that of helots, the highest water-mark of his concession to the native races. From his point of view, his argument was not unreasonable. He realized that equality between the Uitlanders and the burghers involved, as it certainly did involve, the gradual but irresistible sub-

stitution of British views for Dutch ideas, and the triumph of the nineteenth-century currents of opinion over those of the sixteenth entailed, sooner or later, the recognition that before the law the 'nigger' was as much a man as the Boer. There were other and more sordid motives which influenced the narrow oligarchy ruling at Pretoria. But the lust of gold which infected the capital had not spread amongst the Boers of the veld. I have always regarded it as one of the most pathetic episodes of history that the one tiny branch of the European stock which had no craving for wealth, but had a passionate love of isolation, should have faced the appalling horrors and the intolerable sufferings of the Great Trek in order to secure that single boon which was most precious to them—that this tiny race should have pitched its ultimate camp on the top of a gold-mine. It was not for Kruger or for Leyds or for the autocratic clique at Pretoria that the Boer burghers rose as one man at the call to arms. Their response was due to the inbred and inveterate fear of the Boer that British ascendancy and direct authority in the Transvaal would extinguish for ever those privileges of proud isolation and of unquestioned absolutism within his own farm for which he had made so many and so great sacrifices. It is doubtful whether the Boer on the veld had gained any material advantage from the exactions of the Executive at Pretoria. He was fighting for liberty as he understood it, and when his training and traditions are taken into consideration, his motives and his actions are very far indeed from being ignoble. He has long known that control over the wealth of the Witwatersrand has passed from his own government for ever, and for that loss he cares little or nothing. He still hopes that that isolated freedom and unsocial independence which he cherishes may be defended by stubborn resistance. As a matter of incontestable fact, the Boer on the veld, when settled government has once been established by the British, will know no difference between the régimes of Mr. Kruger and Lord Milner. In the ordinary nature of things, he will never see the tax-collector or the policeman, which are, in his eyes, the incarnate symbols of the system he abhors.

Lord Milner's greatest service to his country has been the

success with which he has opened the eyes of his fellow-subjects to the absolute incompatibility of these two systems. He made no new discovery. The problem was not a mystery to Lord Charles Somerset, to Sir Benjamin D'Urban, to Sir George Grey, or to Sir Bartle Frere; but it was left to Lord Milner to convince his countrymen of what his predecessors had been unable to make even Ministers understand. It is true that Lord Milner enjoyed a supreme advantage which had been denied to those who preceded him; he had at his back a determined, resolute, and far-sighted Minister, upon whom relentless attacks, bitter taunts, and malignant imputations were alike wasted. Mr. Chamberlain was determined that British supremacy should be unchallenged wherever Great Britain had a legitimate claim. He saw that in South Africa that supremacy was not only not recognised, but was insolently defied. When he sent Lord Milner on his most difficult and responsible errand, he determined, having chosen his man with infinite care, to back him with all his authority. What he sought in his representative was keen insight, broad sympathies, a profound knowledge of men, and indomitable courage. Such qualities are not to be found every day combined in one man. In Lord Milner Mr. Chamberlain believed that he had discovered that man, and it is not for me, but for history, to decide whether the Colonial Secretary was right or wrong.

In another respect, which I should be inclined to place first in order of importance, Lord Milner's appointment was *per se* of incalculable benefit to his country. I am not inclined here to enter into an analysis of the character and qualifications of one who is my friend. It is, however, open to anyone, whether friend or stranger, to dwell upon the reputation he had acquired and the impression he had made upon those who were brought into personal contact with him. These included distinguished men in all walks of life, and, as may be gathered from the farewell banquet to him to which I have referred elsewhere, the common denominator, so to speak, of their agreement had nothing whatever to do with politics, or even the profession of politics. There were at that banquet men who, in profound disagreement upon most questions of life, art and literature, were united in their

desire to do honour to what they conceived to be the exalted character of their guest. Whether they were correct or mistaken in their judgment is quite immaterial for my point. South Africa had been for many years either utterly ignored in England or a bone of contention between opposing parties. The appointment of Lord Milner convinced all sorts and conditions of men that the interests of that part of Her Majesty's dominions would not only be in vigorous hands, but in the keeping of a man who was not swayed by partisan motives. They held Lord Milner to be an inflexible, impartial and high-minded statesman, who could be thoroughly trusted to hold the balance between conflicting influences in the country over which he was set. How valuable this estimate of the High Commissioner was will be best realized by conjuring up a picture of what would have happened had he been an ordinary party nominee, rewarded, for purely party services, by a great colonial governorship. One set of men would have defended his every action as a matter of loyalty to their party, while another set would have scanned with jealous eyes every step he took, not with a view of compassing his personal downfall, but with the object of discrediting the Ministers who had nominated him. In such circumstances a solution of the South African problem would have been an impossibility. From that most formidable danger Lord Milner's reputation saved us. From first to last there was a body of influential men, recruited perhaps more largely from the Liberal ranks than from those of the Government, who, knowing or believing that they knew the rare qualifications of Lord Milner for his post, determined that he should have fair-play. His short-lived incursion into the fields of journalism had left an impression upon that critical class very like to that he had made upon the world outside journalism. Even after he had entered upon the rough and stormy path of controversy, he still had behind him the support of a body of independent opinion which realized that *nemo repente fit turpissimus:* its adherents refused to believe that the large-minded, soft-hearted, impartial Alfred Milner, with whom they had been in daily intimacy for so long, had merely by crossing the equator become an arrogant, narrow, and bitter partisan.

And so it came to pass that the greater part of his task had been accomplished before the spirit of faction in England had marked him down as a desirable victim. Even then the more distinguished members of the Liberal party who knew, or thought they knew, their Alfred Milner refused to offer him up as a sacrifice on the altar of party. He was saved from the fate of Sir Bartle Frere because—though, like his great predecessor, he conquered the esteem and admiration of all who were brought in contact with him—Lord Milner's influence extended over a wider area. The greater part of Sir Bartle Frere's life had been spent in splendid and devoted service to his Sovereign in distant parts of the Empire. Those who knew him best were men who had served with him or under him in India, and distinguished diplomats like Sir Robert Morier, or permanent officials such as Sir Robert Herbert, and others of very high standing, whose occupation in life limited their influence upon public opinion. To the large majority of Sir Bartle Frere's admirers, men passionately indignant with the treatment he had received, the motto of their lives had been 'Discipline, Duty and Silence.' Therefore, at the critical period of Sir Bartle Frere's career, the men best qualified to defend him against the venomous attacks of an ignorant faction were at a loss to know how to undertake his defence. Lord Milner was more fortunate in numbering amongst his adherents politicians of all classes equipped with all the arts of controversy, and of journalists, whose business it is to be ready at a moment's notice for a campaign of attack or defence. That was a part of Lord Milner's good fortune, and it was also a part of the good fortune of the country. Before the violence of partisan spirit had reached its height, Lord Milner's position had been secured against the assaults of any hurricane that might buffet him.

The third great service which the High Commissioner rendered to the Empire was his lucid and uncompromising exposition of the one goal for which we must make in South Africa. Hitherto people with the easy confidence and unruffled indolence which is characteristic of our race had taken our supremacy in South Africa as much for granted as the stability of our Raj in India. Lord Milner succeeded in

opening their eyes to the fact that that supremacy was not only challenged, but actually menaced, and that chief amongst those who were sapping and mining at its foundations were men who were professing an unctuous lip-loyalty to their Sovereign.

And the fourth service which I shall mention was his demonstration that, though there was but one goal, there were several conceivable lines by which it might be approached. He tried them all. Whatever may have been his innermost convictions as to the practicability of this path or that, he was determined that every possible pacific road should be tried before a new path had to be cut with the sword. Nobody more clearly than himself realized how terrible and devastating a war must inevitably prove to be in South Africa; he had made this sufficiently clear in the despatch I have quoted when dealing with Mr. Molteno's allegations. He was the first High Commissioner since the days of Sir Bartle Frere to recognise that the key to South Africa was to be found in Cape Colony. Much had happened since Sir Bartle Frere's fateful administration, but nothing that happened had changed the essential conditions of the problem. Lord Milner soon learnt one *arcanum imperii* that the aspirations for a united South Africa independent of Great Britain had their nursery and forcing-beds within the borders of the colony. The saplings were transplanted to the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, but they were reared in Cape Colony. It was, therefore, his first object to endeavour by all legitimate methods to abolish the anti-English nursery in the Cape. It was not by force or menace that he endeavoured to attain this end. He recognised and encouraged the cardinal ambition of the Afrikander party, that there should be called into existence a united South Africa — united, that is to say, not by recognition of a common flag or by direct allegiance to the throne of Great Britain, but by the adoption of a common policy with regard to all the great problems in which every State and colony in South Africa was immediately interested. On the other hand, he warned the Afrikander Bond that the question of British supremacy was altogether outside the field of control versy. By its flag Great Britain would stand while it had

a soldier in its barracks or a sixpence in its treasury. He therefore sought to impress the leaders of Afrikander opinion at the Cape with the necessity of persuading their neighbours that the task of expelling Great Britain from South Africa was one altogether beyond their strength. He urged them, in a word, to use their influence with the South African Republic to secure such an equality of system as would preclude all possibility of British interference with their independence. It was not much that he pleaded for. Let President Kruger, he said, bring not only the letter but the spirit of his administration into line with that which prevails in the British colonies and the Orange Free State, and the independence of his Republic will be assured for ever. So long, he told them, as men of British birth were treated as helots in one part of South Africa, there could be no real union of hearts between British and Dutch in other parts of the country. To the Dutch he said: Bring your overwhelming influence to bear upon Mr. Kruger to treat the British Uitlanders in the Transvaal as you are, and always have been, treated by the Imperial Government in the colony. That moderate appeal was construed by the Afrikander Bond as a declaration of war against Afrikanderdom. From that moment Lord Milner became in their eyes the incarnation of all they hated most—the principles not of British administrative supremacy, but of British social and political ideals. The peaceful path to the desired goal was barricaded by the obstinacy and arrogance of the Afrikander Bond.

There was still another road open to peace in South Africa. It was tried with unlimited patience and the most conciliatory temper at Bloemfontein. Nothing, it was obvious, could be hoped for from the influence of the Cape Afrikanders. Lord Milner, therefore, with the thorough and cordial assent of the Home Government, essayed the effect of a direct appeal to President Kruger. He affected to ignore the existence of any aggressive design on the part of the two Republics. He assumed, in order to smooth the paths of diplomacy, that the sole motive influencing Mr. Kruger was a passionate attachment to the independence of what he always described as 'his' country. At Bloemfontein

Lord Milner endeavoured to convince him that the one and only method of securing that independence upon a permanent basis was to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Uitlander population with sincere goodwill, and to cut off once and for all the main source of perennial disagreements between the Imperial Government and the Boer Executive. He showed him clearly that the reforms he advocated, so far from weakening the independence of the Republic, would strengthen it against even the possibility of successful attack. He asked for no concessions, he sought to inflict no humiliation; he merely pleaded with President Kruger to take such steps as would prevent divisions in his own house from bringing it to destruction. His arguments and his appeals were alike wasted upon the stiff-necked Pharaoh of Pretoria, who was determined that the Uitlander population should by their exertions build up for him a stronghold from which he might sally forth to drive their fellow-countrymen from South Africa. There might have been another and yet another effort on the part of Lord Milner to discover a way of peace, but Mr. Kruger and his advisers spared him the perhaps futile labour by insolently throwing down the gauntlet of defiance to the paramount Power. The war which ensued, though it added to rather than diminished the burdens imposed upon Lord Milner's shoulders, took for the time the supreme direction of affairs out of the hands of the statesman and transferred them to the soldier. Even in the labours of war Lord Milner took more than his due share. A new page was to be written in the Book of Fate, but the writing was to be inscribed with the sword, and until 'Finis' is written upon that new scroll it is impossible to continue the arrested narrative of Lord Milner's work in South Africa.

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